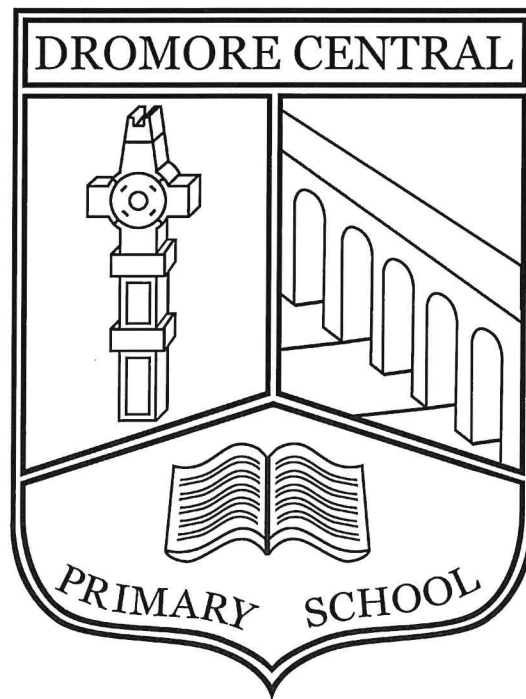


Dromore Central Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed December 2017

Introduction

Bullying is in contravention of children's rights to be protected from all forms of violence, both physical and mental. It infringes on their right to education and to freedom from torture and inhumane and degrading treatment, under the Human Rights Act of 1998.

Dromore Central Primary School is completely opposed to bullying. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles by which we wish to live and work.

All members of the school community have a right to a safe and caring environment which is conducive to effective teaching and learning, free from intimidation and fear.

In DCPS staff, parents and children work together to create and maintain a safe, 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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Positive Behaviour Policy and Pastoral Care Policy.

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be described as being deliberate action done to cause distress in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the child who is displaying bullying behaviour.

A pupil may be considered to be the victim of bullying when he/she feels powerless to defend themselves in incidents which they did not initiate.

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviours usually have 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.

Bullying has been defined by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) 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 identifying if behaviour should be considered as bullying we must consider the motivation of the individual or group. Besag (1989) states:

(Bullying is) An attitude rather than an act

If the behaviour is intentionally harmful, repeated, causes distress and is aimed at a selected target it may be classed as bullying.

However, a child who falls victim to an indiscriminate act i.e. is accidentally struck, may not be considered as being bullied.

Preventative Curriculum

Through various curricular areas including PDMU, Circle Time and assemblies, our emphasis is on creating a culture of respect, understanding and tolerance in order to prevent bullying incidents from occurring.

- Other initiatives which address this include:
- Microsoft representative speaking to children about online safety
- 'Love for Life' delivering workshops on e-safety and good decision making
- Women's Aid Helping Hands programme is delivered to all Year Four pupils
- NSPCC assemblies on 'Speak Out. Stay Safe.' Workshops delivered to P6 and P7 children
- Targeted assemblies during Anti-Bullying Week
- Parental workshops delivered by 'Love for Life' on keeping children safe online

Types of Bullying

- **Physical** e.g. hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting.
- **Verbal and emotional** e.g. name calling, teasing, spreading rumours, making threats, writing offensive notes.
- **Gestures** e.g. hand signals of a derogatory nature, clenching fists, threatening movements.
- **Extortion** e.g. using threats to extort money, stealing another pupil's property or damaging it.
- **Exclusion** e.g. persuading others to stop a pupil doing an activity.
- **Cyber** bullying e.g. sending offensive texts / emails / photographs.

Restorative Ethos

The staff at Dromore Central will seek to promote 'Whole-School Well-Being' by providing a restorative ethos in their classrooms. A restorative ethos:

- is about developing, maintaining and repairing positive relationships
- is about helping young people learn and develop the skills to make good choices now and throughout their lives – if we've learned these skills, they can be taught
- enables us to acknowledge when we have harmed someone and think about what to do to put it right
- encourages us to consider our feelings and those of others
- encourages us all to consider our behaviour and the effect it has on others.

Schools have a 'Duty of Care' and need to provide support for **all** those affected by bullying behaviour.

In line with current NIABF advice, a solution focused model will be used to enable Dromore Central to move beyond a traditional punitive model when responding to bullying behaviour.

Assessing the level of bullying behaviour and appropriate interventions

The three levels of bullying correlate with the three bands of unacceptable behaviour as identified in our 'Positive Behaviour Policy'.

It is important to remember that the main aim of any intervention is to

RESPOND to the bullying that is taking place

RESOLVE the concern and

RESTORE the well-being of all those involved.

Level 1: Low Level Bullying Behaviour

When the bullying behaviour has been assessed and is perceived to be minor, or a first time occurrence.

This behaviour can be effectively managed within the classroom environment.

Level 2: Complex / intermediate Bullying Behaviour

Following assessment, if the bullying behaviour continues, is considered more severe and / or is resistant to change.

This level of bullying behaviour is not so easily managed within the classroom environment. The class teacher may involve the parents, SENCO, Vice-Principal and Principal.

Level 3: High Risk Bullying Behaviour

When the bullying behaviour presents with significant mental health, criminal and / or safeguarding and child protection concerns.

Such severe bullying concerns may be new, or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk. Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to other pupils/staff.

Such serious bullying behaviour will involve parents and the school safeguarding team and will be brought to the attention of the Board of Governors. In addition, the involvement of outside agencies may be sought.

Interventions

Level 1

At this level, interventions are designed to help individuals recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to “get them back on track” while listening to and supporting/strengthening the targeted pupil(s).

This level of bullying may be addressed through ‘Restorative Questioning’ by the adult e.g.

1. Tell me what happened.
2. What were you thinking that led you to behave that way?
3. Who has been affected by what you have done?
4. Can you tell me how that person has been affected by your behaviour?
5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

This strategy requires the pupil to verbally commit to behaving appropriately thus taking greater responsibility for his/her subsequent behaviour. By referring to specific expectations it is less likely that the pupil will perceive the correction as a personal attack and therefore be more inclined to accept responsibility for his/her behaviour.

Level 2

At this level, it may be the case that further ‘Restorative Measures’ can resolve the bullying situation. However, with more complex bullying behaviours, which may be resistant to change, it may require that the school collaborate with the parents, SENCO, Vice-Principal and Principal. The Safeguarding / Pastoral Team will refer to the school’s Positive Behaviour Policy to ensure that the response is consistent with the provisions outlined in this policy.

Level 3

Bullying behaviours assessed as Level 3 are severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of others in the school. The school’s safeguarding procedures will need to be invoked.

The Safeguarding Team will liaise with the pupils concerned, the parents and outside agencies where necessary. The school’s response will be consistent with the SEN Code of Practice and most current Child Protection Guidance.

DE’s guidance ‘Pastoral Care in School: Child Protection’ states:

“Protection Procedures should be instigated. The victim’s needs should always be paramount. Where a pupil’s bullying behaviour is persistent and defies attempts by the school to address it satisfactorily by behaviour management strategies or disciplinary methods within a reasonable time, the child protection procedures should be instigated.” (page 42)

In some circumstances, parents / carers may be experiencing their own challenges which contribute to their child’s behaviour in school. Referral to EA agencies will be required at this stage e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Pupil Personal Development Services, Educational Psychology. In addition, external agencies may be involved including the Gateway Team, EWO, PSNI G.P., CAMHS or a referral made to the Family Support Hub.

Identification

Through our Child Protection Policy parents know to whom they should speak if they have a concern about the welfare of their child. We will always listen to the concerns of parents, carry out an investigation and maintain communication between parent and school. Similarly, pupils, through the delivery of our Child Protection Policy know to whom they should bring any concerns and within the school we have clear lines of communication. In investigating any reports of bullying we will ascertain from teachers and pupils the extent and nature of the perceived problem.

We aim to educate staff about the signs and symptoms of bullying e.g.

- irregular attendance
- unwillingness to go to school
- a pattern of head or stomach aches
- torn clothes
- missing belongings
- cuts and bruises
- nightmares
- bed-wetting etc.

In order to identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at Dromore Central, we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils
- All staff will seek to respond, resolve and restore
- All parent-teacher consultations regarding alleged bullying will be recorded
- NIABF Posters will be displayed in school dissuading children from bullying
- The 'Childline' telephone number to be displayed clearly in school
- The Safeguarding Team will be informed if the perceived bullying behaviour cannot be resolved within the classroom environment
- Class talks/assemblies on bullying
- Close liaison with Classroom Assistants and Supervisors to monitor behaviour and identify possible patterns

Advice to pupils who feel they are bullied

When you are being bullied:

- Be firm and clear - look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away

After you have been bullied:

- Tell your teacher or classroom assistant. If the bullying happens at break, lunchtime or journeying to / from school tell your teacher as soon as possible.
- You can talk to a member of the School Safeguarding Team. They are:

Mrs Allen (Principal)

Mr McCune (Acting Vice Principal)

Mrs Mackay (SENCo, Child Protection, Pastoral Care)

- Tell your family
- If you are afraid to tell an adult on your own take a friend with you
- Keep on speaking until someone listens
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened

When you are talking to an adult about bullying be clear about:

- What has happened to you
- How often it has happened
- Who was involved
- Who saw what was happening
- Where it happened
- What you have done about it already

Pupils' entitlement and responsibility

"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence (physical and mental). They must be kept from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them." (Article 19 UN Convention of the Rights of the Child 1992.)

In order to realise this, children need to be educated in an environment which:

- is safe and caring
- provides challenges and is non-threatening
- encourages children to feel secure
- values children's opinions and involves them, where appropriate, in determining school policy and rules
- shows an awareness of children's individual needs and makes an effort to meet these

Within this ethos, pupils have a responsibility to:

- treat all pupils, teachers and other staff with respect
- behave correctly at all times during the day
- respect school property and the property of other pupils
- follow the rules of the school
- refuse to engage in any bullying situation
- if present when bullying occurs report the incident or suspected incident to an adult
- report all incidents of bullying, where they are the victim, to a member of staff

Parents' entitlement and responsibility

Parents are entitled to expect that:

- their child will be educated in an atmosphere which is safe, caring and not characterised by violence and intimidation
- the school will take all reasonable steps to prevent bullying occurring
- any bullying incident which is reported will be investigated according to the school's guidelines
- any bullying incident that is found to have taken place will be dealt with in line with the school's guidelines
- they will be informed, where it is deemed necessary, following Level 1 bullying.
- a member of the Safeguarding Team will contact them following Level 2 / Level 3 bullying

Parental responsibilities include:

- ensuring that their child respects and co-operates with teachers, ancillary staff and other pupils
- seeing that their child upholds the rules of the school

- contact the school to report any concerns over bullying behaviour
- support for all aspects of the school ethos

Teachers' entitlement and responsibility

All teachers and other adults in the school community have the right to:

- work in a positive environment where there is respect and fairness at all times
- truthfulness and honesty from pupils
- equal treatment from all staff and pupils
- co-operation from pupils and parents

Teachers have a responsibility to ensure:

- the well-being of all the children in their care including:
 - making them feel secure
 - bringing out their best qualities
 - treating them impartially
 - the rules of the school are implemented consistently, fairly and reasonably

Principal's entitlement and responsibility

The Principal has the right to:

- work in a positive environment where there is respect and fairness at all times;
- have the full co-operation and support of parents, staff, Board of Governors and the EA when dealing with all incidents of a bullying nature.

The Principal has the responsibility to:

- provide a safe, secure and happy environment within the school
- ensure the Anti-bullying policy is delivered to all staff
- follow the protocols detailed within the Anti-bullying Policy alongside the Positive Behaviour, Special Educational Needs and E-Safety Policies

Board of Governors' entitlement and responsibility

The Board of Governors has the right to:

- have the full co-operation and support of parents, staff and the EA when dealing with all incidents of a bullying nature

The Board of Governors has the responsibility to:

- ensure that the Anti-bullying Policy is implemented in Dromore Central
- support the Principal and staff when issues of an Anti-bullying nature are brought to their attention

This policy was ratified by the Governors at a meeting on:

Signed : _____ Dated: _____

(Chairman)