

Promoting Positive Behaviour at Dunmore Nursery & Benarty Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Redraft September 2021

Rationale

Bullying behaviour is never acceptable, all of our Dunmore and Benarty children have an entitlement to learn and play in an environment in which they feel valued, respected, safe and are free from all forms of abuse, bullying or discrimination.

Getting it Right for Every Child

This policy also reflects the principles of *Getting it Right for Every Child*, where each child should be *safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included*.

Health and Wellbeing is a central aspect of our curriculum and is the responsibility of all staff.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

This is a comprehensive and internationally binding agreement on the rights of children. It is based on *equality, dignity, respect, protection, development and participation*. We recognise that bullying is a breach of children's rights and this policy is firmly rooted in the UNCRC, most notably Articles 3,12,13,19,28,29,39. More information on the UNCRC can be found at the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland website www.cypcs.org.uk/

Our School Values

All of Dunmore and Benarty staff are committed to supporting our children to demonstrate our school ASPIRE values - **Ambition, Success, Perseverance, Inclusion, Respect and Empower**.

What do we mean by bullying?

We work to create a positive and supportive ethos. Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Adults do not expect to be verbally or physically abused by colleagues or friends and children have the same right to be free from bullying and to feel safe in their environments. There have been many different definitions and theories about what constitutes bullying, but it is not helpful to define bullying purely in terms of behaviour. Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on the other person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out and it can happen face to face and online. (Scottish Government, 2017)

This may include:

- being called names, teased, put down or threatened
- being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- having belongings taken or damaged
- being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you
- receiving abusive messages electronically
- behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves
- being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be

This can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions or the fear of these. This is not an exhaustive list and it is important to consider impact, rather than intent and persistence when defining bullying behaviours.

What to do if someone says they are being bullied?

It is crucial for school staff to listen and get it right, offer support whenever required and be mindful of the potential need for their support, no matter how busy they are at the time. What matters most is that staff listen to what the child is saying and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling. Children are often concerned that no one will take them seriously, if they tell that they are being bullied. Staff will show them that they are believed and are being taken seriously. This can be done by gently encouraging them to talk, find out what happened, who was involved, where and when - write it down if it helps. Staff might have to do some probing, but will let the child speak without interruption as far as possible. Keeping notes is helpful but it is also important that the child knows why and how the notes will be used. This information would form the basis for further investigation and recording.

Respectme recommend that staff ask the following five questions:

1. What was the behaviour?
2. What impact did it have?
3. What does the child want to happen?
4. What do I need to do about it?
5. What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

What about the child who is presenting with bullying behaviour?

- Deal with the behaviour in the same way as you would with any type of distressed behaviour.
- Listen and take time to find out the reasons for the bullying behaviour.
- Do not label the individual or group as 'bullies', name the behaviours.
- Be prepared for a strong reaction from parents and carers and the children.

- Be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behaviour.
- Address what's happening behind the behaviour with the child and their family, even when the bullying has stopped.

There will be a wide range of actions or consequences that we can take in response to bullying incidents. These actions are proportionate and appropriate to the age and stage of the child and to the incident.

We will respond by

- Providing a variety of means to allow pupils to report bullying for themselves or their peers.
- Providing support for children who are experiencing bullying behaviour.
- Helping the person displaying bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour and supporting them as they change their behaviour.
- Involving parents/carers, as appropriate, in supporting both children who are bullied and those who are displaying bullying.
- Responding to parental concerns and meeting with parents as soon as possible to discuss concerns and plan a way forward.
- Ensuring the level of bullying in our Nurseries and School is monitored by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (DHTs and HT)

Parents and Carers are requested to:

- Work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying cannot thrive.
- Inform nursery/school of bullying behaviour at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Address their children's behaviour when it affects others negatively and refrain from engaging directly in a negative way with any other children involved or their parents and other family members.
- Manage their children's use of electronic devices and social media, including setting parental controls, ensuring privacy settings are in place and adhering to age guidelines.
- In the first instance, report any abuse to website providers, delete nasty or offensive messages and ensure their children unfriend or block persons potentially perpetrating abuse.
- Be aware of the type of incidents which may have to be reported Police Scotland – retain any evidence which may include screenshots, messages, images etc.

- Understand that we seek to understand the experiences and address the needs of all children, who experience bullying behaviour as well as those who present bullying behaviour, within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.
- Be given the opportunity to express their views respectfully.

The views of the child/children should always be taken into account in the decision-making process of whether to inform parents/carers. It is important to sensitively weigh up the risks and benefits of informing parents/carers, as there maybe occasions where the child thinks that in doing so might make the matter worse or may place the child in a harmful situation, e.g. might be one that leads to the parent/carer taking the situation into their own hands and escalating an already difficult situation by confronting the person who allegedly displayed the bullying behaviour or using social media.

It is most likely that parents/carers will be informed as they can play an essential role in prevention and addressing of bullying incidents. This may be face to face meeting in school or by telephone. A record of all communication will be kept, in pastoral notes.

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