

# Dunbarney Primary - Anti – Bullying Policy

December 2013

The fundamental principle upon which this policy's approach to anti-bullying is based is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This states;  
***“Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.” (Article 19)***

*A national approach to anti-bullying for Scotland's children and young people, 2009 also states:  
“Every child and young person in Scotland should grow up free from bullying.”*

## What is Bullying?

In 2009 a Scottish Government report states:

*“There is now a much deeper understanding of the complexity of issues surrounding bullying behaviour and the dynamic nature of this social problem. We have therefore aimed to avoid labelling children as bullies or victims because these labels can constrain thinking of the problem as solely a characteristic of the individual, rather than as a problem that emerges from complex social dynamics”*

**What is bullying behaviour?** Bullying is a combination of behaviours including:

**Physical :** This may include hitting, kicking, pushing, or taking or damaging someone else's property.

**Verbal :** This may include spreading rumours, name calling, teasing or talking about people.

**Emotional :** This may include excluding someone from the group, embarrassing someone or making them feel bad for being different.

**Cyber :** Cyber bullying does not take place face to face but occurs when technology is used to send messages, texts or images which hurt, humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Cyber bullying often involves the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example, name calling, spreading rumours or leaving people out, but it takes place online on social networking sites, in chat rooms, during gaming or instant messaging platforms. The impact of cyber bullying is as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour.

**NB. Some online behaviour is illegal. If an individual sends, posts or forwards indecent, racist, sectarian, threatening or inflammatory comments or photographs, they may be committing an offence and may be subject to prosecution.**

## Prejudice Based Bullying

- **Bullying behaviour related to race, religion, culture or nationality**

Physical differences and different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds can be seen in the eyes of some to be evidence of one section of society being inferior/superior to another. A child or young person may be made to feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status. This can adversely affect the lives of those from minority ethnic, gypsy traveller, refugee and those of non-Scottish backgrounds; as well as those from different cultural and religious communities.

- **Bullying behaviour related to sexual identity**

Bullying behaviour related to sexual orientation is also classified as Homophobic bullying. Children or young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or transgender (LGBT), or are perceived to be, face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic bullying is perhaps the form of bullying behaviour least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure

carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The child or young person may not want to report bullying if it means “coming out” to teachers and parents before they are ready to.

- **Bullying behaviour related to gender**

Children and young people of both sexes can be affected by this type of bullying behaviour. It is based on the acceptability (or otherwise) of certain male and female behaviours and applies to those that do not conform. Personality traits, social activities and academic choices can influence this type of bullying behaviour. The child and young person can often be pressurised to ‘fit in’ with the crowd.

- **Bullying behaviour related to disabilities or Additional Support Needs**

Whether in mainstream or specialised schools, children and young people with disabilities or ASN do not always have the levels of social confidence and robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying behaviour. The behaviour can take any of the forms previously described, but can also include more manipulative behaviour i.e. taking advantage of their emotional, behavioural or physical difficulties.

- **Bullying behaviour related to young carers or care circumstances**

Children or young people can be more vulnerable to experiencing bullying behaviour by the fact that they provide care and assistance to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem. Young carers often take on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Children or young people in care are equally as vulnerable to bullying behaviour due to their unique circumstances such as adoption, living away from birth parents or having social work involvement.

- **Bullying behaviour related to appearance or health/medical conditions**

Children or young people with visible health or medical conditions, such as eczema or facial disfigurement, may be more likely than their peers to become subject to bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can also result in bullying. Obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it), can also be exploited and used as a reason to exhibit bullying behaviour.

## **Whole School Strategies to Prevent and Minimise Bullying**

This school policy is for all involved in the school community. It builds upon existing good practise and school ethos and is intended to deal effectively when bullying behaviour occurs. When bullying behaviour does happen the school will respond appropriately by addressing the needs of children experience bullying behaviour as well as those who exhibit these behaviours. This will be carried out within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support. Recognition will be given to the needs of all involved.

- Pupils will be made aware that they can report their concerns to all staff within school.
- Pupils will be encouraged to speak up and speak out, either verbally or through a friend or circle time.
- All incidents of bullying behaviour, including cyber-bullying, will be investigated promptly and thoroughly by an appropriate member of staff.
- All involved will be given the opportunity to talk and be listened to.
- The child who has experienced bullying behaviour will be involved in agreeing a resolution
- Parents will be involved where appropriate
- Verbal feedback will be given to appropriate people, written feedback when appropriate.
- The emotional and physical effects of bullying behaviour will be considered.
- Information will be recorded to help provide information on recurring patterns such as:-
  1. Involvement of particular young people, staff, or other adults
  2. Where and when bullying behaviour takes place
  3. Identification of any aspects of discrimination or prejudice
  4. The effectiveness of any action taken

## **How will bullying dealt with?**

All aspects of bullying incidents will be dealt with in a way that fosters mutual respect, individual responsibility, resolution and support. Strategies will include;

- School rules being agreed and set with pupils
- The school values, agreed with pupils and staff, will be promoted and referred to regularly.
- Restorative approaches will be used in conversation with pupils
- Small group work /discussions / team building activities / assemblies
- Reflection diary, where appropriate
- Meetings involving pupils, parent /carers/ staff as appropriate
- Outside help /advice/involvement of other partners or agencies will be sought if required
- Appropriate consequences are put in place as part of the resolution
- Police involvement or engagement if required
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An anti –bullying message will be promoted **at all times** through maintaining a positive culture and ethos within our schools that will;

- Ensures openness, honesty and integrity
- Promote respect for all, irrespective of race, gender, age, religious belief, sexuality, ability or disability
- Ensure everyone is treated fairly
- Encourage pupils to trust one another more
- Build confidence and self-esteem.
- Includes everyone
- Encourage the development of a caring community of adults and pupils

## **Procedure**

- All allegations of bullying will be carefully investigated;
- Pupils, parents and staff will be encouraged to talk openly about the issue;
- As part of the curriculum, greater understanding of bullying in all its forms will be developed;
- Children will be taught strategies to help them deal with bullying situations which they may encounter;
- The school will protect and support all parties involved.
- Staff will deal with bullying in a calm manner and be role models for pupils.

**Policy agreed in December 2013 following consultation with pupils, staff and families.**