



## Doonfoot Primary School

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying behaviour goes against many of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child articles and may prevent children and young people from enjoying their full rights and developing their full potential in learning and in life. Bullying is a Breach of Children's Rights.

The UNCRC, article 2 states (without discrimination):

*"The convention applies to every child whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, no matter what type of family they come from."*

The purpose of this policy is to support the development of a positive, respectful and supportive environment within Doonfoot Primary. Bullying and prejudiced based bullying is often a combination of behaviours that impact negatively on a young person's wellbeing and capacity to learn. This policy is intended to provide guidance to all stakeholders in the management of bullying behaviours that prevent young people feeling safe, included, responsible, respected, active, nurtured, achieving and healthy and from reaching their full potential.

This policy also recognises that when instances of bullying do arise, the school must act quickly to address the impact on both those who experience and those who display bullying behaviour.

#### Definition of Bullying

- In Scotland, we describe bullying as behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or demeaned.
- Bullying is defined by its impact on the person/people affected as a result of the intended or unintended behaviour and actions of others. Bullying behaviour impacts on the wellbeing of those affected and results in a reduced sense of self-esteem and a negative impact on wellbeing. Bullying behaviour is typically characterised by the individual's involved perceiving difference between themselves and others.
- Bullying can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidating behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can be bullied on the grounds of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion or other real or perceived difference.
- Bullying can be subtle or it can be overt. It can cause short-term suffering for the pupil who experiences bullying behaviour or it can have long-term effects.

Bullying behaviours may include:

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening;
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours;
- Pushing, hitting, tripping and kicking;
- Taking and damaging belongings;
- Online bullying: sending abusive texts, email or instant messages
- Intimidation and extortion e.g. taking someone's lunch money;
- Making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied; and
- Targeting someone because of who they are or are perceived to be.

## **School Commitment**

South Ayrshire Council shares this vision and promotes a culture where bullying behaviour is not acceptable.

- Staff and all other adults connected to Doonfoot Primary school, are committed to providing a establishing a caring, learning community where all members are valued and everyone has a responsibility to promote respect, openness, honesty and understanding.
- It is not an expectation of the school that staff or pupils are subjected to physical or verbal abuse or harassment in any form.
- Staff believe that effective teaching and learning occurs when pupils and staff feel safe, happy and free from anxiety and stress that arises from violent, aggressive or bullying behaviour.
- There are children at Doonfoot Primary School with a wide range of additional support needs. Doonfoot Primary therefore needs to take into consideration, the impact of inappropriate behaviours on certain vulnerable pupils.
- The school will act promptly and firmly to combat bullying and aspects of behaviours that may impact upon the emotional and well-being of all, whenever and wherever it occurs.
- Where appropriate, pupils will be made aware of how they can draw their concerns about bullying to the attention of staff in the confidence and that these will be carefully investigated and, if substantiated, taken seriously and acted upon.
- All staff will be made aware of their responsibilities for ensuring the safety of more vulnerable pupils who, because of the impact of their special needs or additional language issues, are unable to communicate any issues that arise.

## **Expectations and Responsibilities of All Staff**

All staff/volunteers, parents, children and young people must understand that even an incident that occurs in isolation can represent bullying behaviour, leaving a young person worried, unhappy and/or frightened.

All staff employed within Doonfoot Primary shall:

- Strictly follow school policies regarding recording, monitoring and responding to incidents, including: Listening to all children and young people, so as to establish supportive relationships whereby young people feel secure in sharing difficult emotions and sensitive aspects of their lives; reporting any bullying incident; preventatively highlighting and correcting attitudes and behaviour that lead to bullying and discrimination.
- Model behaviour which promotes Health and Wellbeing and build into everyday practice an ethos of caring and compassion, as part of a whole school approach in preventative measures as regards bullying behaviour.

### **Expectations and Responsibilities of Children and Young People**

- Follow guidance detailed within the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Participate in any consultation regarding anti-bullying.
- Treat your peers with respect.
- If you think you are being bullied seek help by confiding in someone you trust.
- Discuss and agree what options are available.
- Be aware of what you post and share online, and treat people with the same respect as you would if they were in the room.
- If you see someone else being bullied report it to a trusted adult.
- Use items such as 'worry' boxes.

### **Expectations of Parents and Carers**

- Familiarise yourself with the schools anti-bullying policy.
- Participate in any consultation regarding anti-bullying.
- Attend any training offered on anti-bullying.
- Actively listen to your child or young person when they tell you about a suspected bullying incident.
- Stay calm.
- Take a lead from your child or young person as to what pace to go at. This will help restore their feeling of being in control.
- Ask them what they want you to do.
- Explore options together; there is never one single answer.
- Telling children or young people to 'hit back' is a common response but not necessarily the best or safest option.
- Contact the school and ask for an appointment.
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve the situation. Don't expect the situation to be fully resolved at the first meeting, that won't always be possible.

## Prevention

Doonfoot Primary School strives to promote a culture based on nurturing relationships for all. To promote such values, we provide children and young people with a range of experiences and implement a variety of strategies and approaches that encourage kindness, honesty and respect.

- Celebration of wider achievements for all through weekly assemblies, presentations and awards
- Buddying and mentoring partnerships to support both pupils and staff
- Creative and motivational ways to engage pupils and raise awareness of bullying through theatre groups, drama, film footage, book studies and music.
- Anti-bullying Fortnight – a whole school focus that raises awareness of bullying and the negative impact it has on others
- Restorative Practices – an approach used by all staff, to support pupils to reflect on and resolve conflicts with peers.
- A wide range of play resources that promote pupils to socialise and engage positively with peers in the playground, encouraged and monitored by support staff and senior managers.
- A range of social spaces and play opportunities to support all pupils during lunch and break times
- Strong, trusting relationships between staff and children across the school, giving children the opportunity to approach and share concerns or worries with key staff
- A system that identifies vulnerable pupils and acts to support such young people
- Alternative ways for children and young people to report bullying incidents; Circle Time, Worry Boxes, Wellbeing Questionnaires etc.
- Curricular inputs on bullying/ HWB teaching/Wellbeing supports/resilience and anti-bullying themes throughout the school year
- Doonfoot Primary School will raise awareness for all staff through on-going training including CLPL and in-service activities.
- All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.
- Information will be shared through websites, newsletters and the school handbook

## Action

Members of staff must use their professional judgement in deciding upon appropriate action based on the impact of the bullying behaviour on the child or young person. When a child or young person claims to have **experienced bullying behaviour** the complaint will be investigated swiftly with a consistent approach. The child or young person will receive appropriate support and protection.

This may include:

- The child or young person being taken to a comfortable place with no distractions;

- The child or young person being reassured that they will be listened to;
- The member of staff should confirm that bullying is never acceptable; they deserve to feel safe;
- They should be gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken;
- The incident should be fully investigated by a member of staff, all statements and accounts should be recorded
- The child or young person should be kept up to date with progress;
- Details of the bullying behaviour and actions taken is recorded in the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module; regardless of the outcome
- The member of staff should inform parents of the incident and action taken, if it is judged to be appropriate (See SAC Management Guidelines for further information/clarification)
- Following the incident, senior leaders should ensure that the child or young person is closely monitored and supported to ensure that the bullying behaviour has stopped

**Impartiality and confidentiality must be respected, with knowledge of the incident being limited to those directly involved with the incident and with any necessary action that follows. It is important not to label children and young people as ‘bullies’ or ‘victims’. Labels can isolate a child, rather than help them to recover or alter their behaviour.**

- When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the leadership team should, based on their professional judgement, endeavour to manage the resolution of the bullying incident within the school.
- Parents should be involved when their active support is needed to implement a resolution of the bullying incident.
- Consideration should be given to the consequences and support given to the young person displaying bullying behaviour to ensure that interventions are intended to improve behaviour.

This may include:

- positive behaviour strategies with an appropriate member of staff, as agreed;
- restorative approaches;
- solution orientated approaches;

### **Helping autistic children and young people develop an awareness of bullying**

- An autistic child can be helped to distinguish between bullying and one-off incidents or misunderstandings by teaching him/her social skills through role-play, or through problem-solving social scenarios.
- Older children may benefit from multiple-choice quizzes, in which they are taught to select appropriate responses to hypothetical situations.
- Some children and young people with ASD may need very explicit explanations of bullying, and perhaps a visual reference (e.g. a list or set of photographs, DVDs or pictures) that illustrates the difference between scenarios that constitute bullying and those which are less serious peer conflicts or misunderstandings.

## Resources

- Bullying – A Guide for Parents and Carers, which includes guidance on on-line bullying, is available from ‘**respectme**’ – Scotland’s Anti-bullying Service on their website – [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)
- Anti-Bullying Alliances- <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week/><https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/toolsinformation/schools-and-teachers>

Please refer to SAC Anti- Bullying Management Guidelines for further information – found within the staff shared area 23/24.

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