

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Donaghadee Primary School



## Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

'Our school is committed to providing an inspiring, dynamic and nurturing environment. Together the school community works to develop each child's emotional, social and academic potential. We aim to create independent, responsible life-long learners.'

At Donaghadee 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, where everyone can achieve their full potential. We aim to prevent bullying in any form through an approach committed to building positive relationships and dealing with incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.

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## Section 2 – Context

### **The Legislative Context:**

[The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#)

[The Education and Libraries Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2003 \(A17-19\)](#)

[The Education \(School Development Plans\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2010](#)

[The Children \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1995](#)

[The Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[The Health and Safety at Work Order \(Northern Ireland\) 1978](#)

### **The Policy & Guidance Context**

[The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors \(DE, 2019\)](#)

[Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour \(DE, 2001\)](#)

[Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools \(DE, 2017\)](#)

[Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland \(Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016\)](#)

[Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures \(SBNI, 2017\)](#)

### **The International Context**

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

The key points to note are:

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

- Provides a legal definition of bullying.
- Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
- Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.
- Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:
  - In school, during the school day

- While travelling to and from school
- When under control of school staff, but away from school (e.g. school trip)
- When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school in the ALC)
- Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.

The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:

- 'Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils' (A.17)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child's right to:

- Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (A.19)
- Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)
- Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)
- Education. (A.28)

### Section 3 – Ethos & Principles

1. This Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the school's aims with a view to maintaining a safe, secure and happy environment for all children and staff.
2. To prevent bullying behaviour in any form and to have a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
3. To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of this Policy and that reported incidents of bullying behaviour will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
4. To ensure that all pupils, staff and parents are aware of their responsibilities.
5. To ensure that the strategies we use to prevent or deal with bullying behaviour are supportive to both the child displaying bullying behaviours and the child experiencing bullying behaviours.

At Donaghadee Primary School:

- We are committed to a school where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying behaviour
- We believe in a school where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safe from bullying behaviour
- We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity
- We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school
- We value the views and contributions of children and young people, we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account
- We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying behaviour and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all

### Section 4 – Consultation and Participation

The policy has been developed in consultation with registered pupils and their parents/carers, in compliance with the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Consultation with pupils takes place annually through either:

- Class-based activities
- School based questionnaires e.g. PASS
- Creation of a reference group of pupils, e.g. the Pupil Council/Buddies

Consultation with staff through:

- Staff survey for all staff, teaching and non-teaching (online)
- Engagement activity for all staff, teaching and non-teaching e.g. annual anti-bullying training
- Representative members of staff involved in writing anti-bullying policy

Consultation with parents/carers takes place through:

- Information posts with parents/carers on Dojo/Seesaw/School App
- Questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers (online) \*
- Engagement with parent groups, e.g. PTA

\*Union action short of strike has delayed this consultation

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## Section 5 – What is Bullying?

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 Definition of “bullying”:

1.—(1) In this Act “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 a 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.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “act” includes omission.

*Bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.*

However, while bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying behaviour, Donaghadee Primary School shall consider the following criteria:

- *severity and significance of the incident*
- *evidence of pre-meditation*
- *impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)*
- *impact of the incidents on wider school community*
- *previous relationships between those involved*
- *any previous incidents involving the individuals*

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a 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 (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

It is important to note that this list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Donaghadee Primary School acknowledges various motivations behind bullying behaviour, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ▪ Age                             | ▪ Marital status            |
| ▪ Appearance                      | ▪ Race                      |
| ▪ Breakdown in peer relationships | ▪ Religion                  |
| ▪ Community background            | ▪ Disability / SEN          |
| ▪ Political affiliation           | ▪ Ability                   |
| ▪ Gender identity                 | ▪ Child Looked After status |
| ▪ Sexual orientation              | ▪ Young Carer status        |
| ▪ Pregnancy                       |                             |

*Bullying behaviour 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 will we 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*

At Donaghadee Primary School we encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

Definitions of emotional and physical harm which are set out in the DE Guidance.

In determining 'harm' we define:

- 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

## Section 6 – Preventative Measures

At Donaghadee Primary School we promote a strong anti-bullying ethos within the school and the wider school community.

Under the legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work is on prevention and the actions taken to promote a safe learning environment.

Examples of these include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying behaviour, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU (e.g. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness training)
- Participation in the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, Odd Socks Day, etc.
- Development of peer-led systems (e.g. Pupil Council and Buddies) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- Development of effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy system, play bus stops, friendship bench) and provision of a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying
- Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch)
- Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.

Preventative measures also include when travelling by bus or other mode of transport. While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways we can further build upon. This includes:

- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling on a bus or other mode of transport
- Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey
- Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. EA Transport, Private Coach Hire, etc) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (e.g. local shops, cafes, service providers, residents, etc) including information on how to raise any concerns with the school
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (e.g. staff playground duty, where appropriate)

Prevention of bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school will also be addressed. Awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way will be delivered. This may include:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (e.g. C2K, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum, NSPCC) to support the promotion of key messages
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Social Media Policy, etc.)

The Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in our wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies. As such, it is essential that these policies align and provide a consistent message. The measures set out here, to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication, are also included in the school's Online Safety Policy, eLearning Policy, Mobile Phone Use Policy and/or Social Media Policy. These are set out in Section 12 of this policy.

Given the nature of technology, as constantly changing and developing, it is important that our school monitors the policy and message and make changes when necessary.

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## Section 7 – Responsibility

Everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school communities.

Everyone in the Donaghadee Primary School community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

- foster positive self-esteem
- behave towards others in a mutually respectful way
- model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
- inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour
- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour
- intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so
- report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff
- emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
- explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others
- listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
- know how to seek support – internal and external

- resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties
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## Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

At Donaghadee Primary School, there are various ways in which pupils, parents and anyone else with concerns can make these known to the school.

### Pupils Reporting a Concern

If pupils have a concern about a potential bullying situation, they should have the opportunity to discuss this with a member of staff that they trust. At Donaghadee Primary School, key staff with responsibility for bullying are identified through Assemblies and wall displays that introduce G Kinkaid (DT), K Bell (DDT) and L Russell (DDT Nursery). However, it is essential that pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. All staff are trained annually with CP and Anti-Bullying updates.

Ways that pupils can report bullying concerns, include:

- Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
- By sending a Dojo message to a member of staff or to a dedicated email address
- By posting a comment in a 'worry box/post box'

It is important to note that ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Through the preventative work taken forward under Section 6, this message should focus on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'. As such, all pupils are encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

### Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers must encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

The process for parents/carers reporting bullying concerns:

- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Head of Key Stage or Vice-Principal, as applicable
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Head of Key Stage/Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. This usually involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Mrs J Gordon.

While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school must be open to receiving such reports from anyone.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and that feedback will be made to the person who made the report. However, it must



be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

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### Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

The focus of any intervention must be on responding to the bullying concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Our strategy for responding to bullying concerns must concentrate on the prevention of any further incidents.

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

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS/Behaviour Management Module - BMM)
- 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 not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- Review outcome of interventions
- Select and implement further intentions as necessary

NIABF advocates a restorative approach to responding to bullying behaviour. Interventions suggested in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource focus on responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved.

When responding to a bullying concern, DPS staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, DPS staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour. (See Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy and Key Stage Rewards and Sanctions)

Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

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### Section 10 – Recording

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

- how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)
- the motivation for the behaviour
- how each incident was addressed by the school
- the outcome of the interventions employed

Donaghadee Primary School Record Keeping – as agreed by Governors and in consultation with partner schools in our area

Initial concern form to be completed as soon as an incident of bullying behaviour is witnessed / reported / alleged. All relevant details and dates to be noted. This form is returned to the Principal / Designated Teacher. If a case of bullying behaviour is suspected, the following procedure will be initiated (the 3-2-1 procedure).

Week One - For the first week this form will be updated on 3 occasions by the teacher involved and signed by the Principal / Designated Teacher. Those involved will be observed, reassured and supported as necessary.

Week Two - As above - twice in the week.

Week Three - As above - once in the week.

If problem appears resolved the Designated Teacher will file the report and parents will be informed.

If the problem is still unresolved, the following course of action will be implemented:

1. An Initial Bullying Concern Form (Part 1) will be completed by the staff member raising the concern and reported to G Kinkaid (DT), K Bell (DDT) or L Russell (DDT – Nursery).
2. The Safeguarding Team, chaired by E Scott, will meet to discuss the concern and complete a Bullying Concern Assessment Form (Part 2).
3. If criteria met, details from the Assessment Form will be uploaded onto SIMS (BMM).
4. Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2K system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school 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. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

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## Section 11 – Professional Development of Staff

Appropriate and adequate training for staff at DPS, including teaching and non-teaching school staff, is paramount. Annual updates and training will be facilitated each August and new members of staff will receive induction training.

At Donaghadee Primary School:

- we are committed to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
  - we will note the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added, etc.
  - we will ensure that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
  - CPD records will be kept and updated regularly
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## Section 12 – Monitoring and Review of Policy

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying 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 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

It is a legal requirement that the Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. However, the policy should be reviewed following any incident which highlights the need for such a review. It must also be reviewed when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance.

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before January 2026.

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#### Section 12 – Links to Other Policies

In the development and implementation of Donaghadee Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors has been mindful of related policies, including:

- Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Online safety Policy
- eLearning Policy
- Mobile Phone Use Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct

Policy date: January 2022

Amended: September 2023