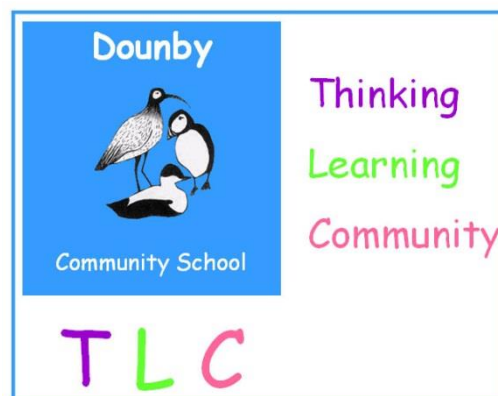


## Anti-bullying policy

### Vision and values

We value:

happiness, health, justice, effort,  
questioning, creativity, equality and respect.



Thinking

Learning

Community

### Statement of Intent

As reflected in our values Dounby Community School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. School recognises that it is not possible to entirely eliminate bullying but all school staff will do their best to tackle bullying behaviour whenever they become aware of it. When pupils are bullied they need to know that they are able to speak to school staff and that staff will do their best to deal with the bullying. Children are encouraged via assemblies and their class teachers to tell someone if they are being bullied, if they witnessed bullying or if they are bullying others. If children feel unable to tell school staff they are encouraged to tell their families and their friends. Children and families know that school can only deal with bullying if staff know about it, and families are encouraged to contact school staff if they become aware of bullying. Staff will always listen carefully and sympathetically to children and parents and carers who want to tell us about bullying, whether they or their children are victims of bullying, have witnessed bullying or have taken part in bullying behaviour.

### What is Bullying?

*"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008)*

In other words bullying is repeated, and it relies on an individual or a group exercising power over another individual or group.

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

- **Indirect** - being unfriendly, spreading rumours, excluding or tormenting, e.g. hiding bags

or books.

- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence including forcefully taking or breaking possessions.
- **Verbal** - name-calling, teasing, use of threats or sarcasm.
- **Cyber** – use of the internet or mobile phones to threaten, ridicule, torment, name-call, or tease inappropriately. Commonly text messages, email, Facebook, Twitter, and gaming platforms are used for these bullying purposes, but there are a growing number of means of using the internet and mobile phones to bully.

Bullying may occur towards an individual or group for no appreciable reason. However, bullying may be racist, homophobic or target those who are disabled, or target those who are in some way different, either in appearance or because of their circumstances.

### **Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying hurts. Bullying can scar individuals for life. At its most severe bullying may be the root cause of mental health problems and may even lead to death. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. However, it is important to keep in mind that bullying is a behaviour, bullying is not a person.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. School needs to be able to work with children who are demonstrating bullying behaviour in order to change their behaviour. Research shows that children who bully are often themselves the victims of bullying, either in the past or concurrently. School staff need to work sympathetically with all children involved in bullying, but also with the intention to require those who are bullying to change their behaviour. Long term monitoring of children involved in bullying, either as victims or as bullies, is required in order to ensure children's well-being and to prevent bullying reoccurring.

### **Responsibilities**

**Headteacher** – To ensure all school staff are aware of the issue of bullying. To ensure all school staff know how to deal with incidents of bullying. To inform parents and carers about bullying, and how school deals with bullying, and how they can support the school and their children when bullying occurs. To inform the children about bullying and how they should respond to it. To investigate incidents of bullying. To respond to individual, and groups of children, who have been bullied, have witnessed bullying or who are bullying. To ensure that bullying incidents are recorded and documented appropriately.

**Class teacher** – To ensure that they know about bullying and how to respond to incidents of bullying (especially to take time with victims of bullying). To inform the children in their class about bullying and how they should respond to it. To investigate incidents of bullying. To respond to individual, and groups of children, who have been bullied, have witnessed bullying or who are bullying. To liaise with parents and carers about incidents of bullying involving children in their class. To liaise with the headteacher over incidents of bullying. To record and document bullying incidents.

**All other school staff** – To ensure that they know about bullying and how to respond to incidents of bullying in school (especially to take time with victims of bullying). To report the details of incidents of bullying to class teachers or directly to the headteacher if the incident is of a serious nature.

**Parent Group** – To be aware of the school's policy and procedures in respect of bullying. To direct parents to the headteacher if they are worried about bullying.

**Parents** – To know what bullying is and to always contact school if their child is affected by bullying.

**Children** – From Primary 3 age children should have an understanding of bullying. Children should tell an adult, either in school or a member of their family if they are bullied, if they witness bullying or if they themselves take part in bullying behaviour. If they cannot tell an adult they should tell other children and ask them to talk to an adult for them. Younger children should always tell an adult if they think they are being bullied. However, younger children do not always understand what bullying is and whilst their worries and concerns must be considered carefully the incidents they report are quite often isolated occasions of unsociable behaviour rather than bullying as defined in this policy (see above).

#### **The school intends that:**

- All school staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- School staff and Parent Group should know about the school's anti-bullying policy and be able to follow that policy and the school's procedures in respect of bullying.
- Pupils and their parents should be well enough informed by the school in order to know what to do if bullying affects them.
- Pupils and parents should have confidence in school that they will be listened to and their concerns and worries acted upon.
- Pupils and their families will be supported by school if bullying affects them.
- There will always be a consistent response from the school to bullying behaviour.

#### **Procedures for parents, carers and school staff if they become aware that bullying is taking place**

##### **Parents and carers**

Become aware of bullying because their child informs them that: they have been bullied, they have witnessed bullying, or they are engaging in bullying behaviour. Become aware of bullying because another parent tells them about it occurring.

1. Contact school by telephone or by email (01856 771234) or [admin.dounby@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:admin.dounby@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk). Please ask to speak to the class teacher, the headteacher ([alastair.forsyth@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:alastair.forsyth@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk)) or the principal teacher ([emmajane.rendall@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk](mailto:emmajane.rendall@glow.orkneyschools.org.uk)). If parents or carers would rather discuss their concerns face to face, please make an appointment to do so, your concerns will be treated as a priority.
2. Give school as much information as possible. Be assured that if it is your child who is demonstrating bullying behaviour you and they will be listened to and treated sympathetically. In every case bullying is considered carefully by school staff.
3. Follow up their initial contact and discussion with school by giving school staff information subsequent to the initial contact. Has the bullying stopped? Has the bullying carried on? If the bullying has carried on what are the details?

##### **School staff**

Become aware of bullying because a child tells them about it, a parent tells them about it or they witness it.

1. Record the incident, briefly, on the record of bullying incident in the appendix to this policy. Put a copy of the record in the bullying file, headteacher's office.
2. Inform the class teacher and give them a copy of the record of bullying incident.
3. Discuss the report of bullying with an experienced colleague (headteacher, principal teacher and support for learning teacher all have considerable experience in responding to incidents of bullying).

4. Agree a strategy for responding to the incident of bullying with the colleague who was consulted. If this strategy involves other staff then they must be involved in the decision making process.
5. Implement the agreed strategy.
6. Monitor the impact of the agreed strategy. Has the bullying stopped? How do you know the bullying has stopped? Are all the children, including the child who was demonstrating bullying behaviour happy?
7. Keep parents appropriately informed throughout the process. Please note that this is not necessarily about children requiring parental responses with regard to bullying behaviours.

### **Protective and preventative strategies**

School has a duty to help children protect themselves from bullying behaviour. In order to achieve this the school will:

- Inform children about bullying and how they should respond to it via an assembly once a term.
- Use the national anti-bullying campaign to inform children about bullying and how they should respond to it.
- Direct class teachers to follow up assemblies and use the national anti-bullying campaign to talk to their class and reinforce the key message for children - to “tell”. (There are numerous resources online to support class teachers with this work.)
- Direct class teachers to always consult colleagues if they believe children in their class are being bullied or are demonstrating bullying behaviours.
- Direct school staff to always inform the relevant class teachers if they witness bullying or become aware of it.
- Have a buddy system for Primary 1 children so that they have an older child they can ask to help them and who will help to protect them. The older children will have had some training so they know what their responsibilities are, and how they should respond to bullying situations.
- Ensure parents know what bullying is and how they should respond to it if they become aware that their child is a victim of bullying, witnesses bullying or demonstrates bullying behaviours. School will distribute a leaflet and make it available online to help parents to identify and respond appropriately to bullying.
- Ensure that the whole school community understands that, bullying is the responsibility of us all and when members of our community become aware of bullying, whether bullying is occurring in school or outwith it, they will consult school staff or staff colleagues.

### **Prejudice and discrimination**

Prejudice and discrimination are frequently part of bullying behaviours. Children learn to be prejudicial and discriminatory, usually via adult influences. School has a duty to teach the alternatives: acceptance, tolerance, inclusion and rejoicing in difference.

There are now more positive role models for children to be aware of, for example, para-olympians as role models for those with disabilities and television personalities as role models for the gay community. However, language that is discriminatory is not infrequently heard from children, for example the word “gay” being used as a derogatory term and as an insult. All school staff have a duty to respond to the use of all prejudicial and discriminatory language from children. The response should be an educative one, for example, “We don’t use that word in that way because...” and not necessarily a response that relies upon

consequences and sanctions. Please refer to the school's equal opportunities policy for further information (soon to be updated) and the school's behaviour policy (revised 2011).

### **Bullying of staff**

School staff can experience bullying. Most commonly this bullying behaviour is demonstrated by managers or by parents of children at the school. However, staff can be bullied by their colleagues or even by children.

Staff have the means to protect themselves from bullying via a number of methods. In principle staff should use the same means as is taught to children, they should "tell". Staff can tell their managers or colleagues, they can talk to officers in the local authority, either in education or human resources. Staff can also talk to their union representatives. Staff may use the "grievance procedure" of Orkney Islands Council to resolve bullying events, and their union or the human resources department will advise them about the use of this procedure.

### **Sanctions and consequences**

Bullying is a complex set of behaviours. Research has shown that children who exhibit bullying behaviours are also victims of these behaviours either concurrently or in the past. Parents of children who are the victims of bullying usually want the bully punished in some way, however, that approach frequently does not stop bullying occurring.

Bullying is best dealt with by colleagues and carers working together. The response to a child or group of children bullying others is most likely to be best dealt with by involving all the children in the solution. However, each situation is different, thus the procedure in this policy for staff to meet and discuss each bullying incident and decide together on an appropriate response to the bullying events. Sanctions and consequences as described in the school's behaviour policy (revised 2011) have their place in managing bullying and are an important element in school's response to bullying.

### **This policy**

This policy has been developed by looking at best practice elsewhere, by reading research, from our own experience as a staff in dealing with bullying behaviours, from questionnaires that were put to parents, staff and children.

The policy will be revised at least every three years. The process for revision will include the use of questionnaires to parents, staff and children. The policy will be revised sooner if circumstances arise that indicate the policy is no longer effective.

**Appendix 1**

**Record of bullying events:**

<b>Bullying incident</b> , children involved and series record e.g. John Smith / Paul Jones, second incident.	<b>Date and time</b>
	<b>This incident:</b>
	<b>First incident in this series as far as is known:</b>
<b>Bullying incident, type of bullying:</b>	<b>Location (of incident):</b>
<b>Supervising staff (your name/s, what you saw, briefly what was said):</b>	
<b>More full report of the bullying, following investigation of events, including all who were involved and their roles and key statements (include the history of this bullying):</b>	
<b>Prejudice or discrimination? If this was a racist, homophobic, sexist or bullying event in which discrimination towards a person with a disability was a feature please note that and any specific details here:</b>	

**Summary of colleague meeting, what we are going to do and why:**

**Summary of discussion or meeting with parent or carer (including date/time and staff involved):**

**If parent/carers not involved why:**

↑

**Local authority informed:**

**Review date:** ↑

**Racist incident logged:**

**Review meeting arranged?:**

**Review meeting date:**