

# **| ANTI-BULLYING POLICY |**

**DINGWALL ACADEMY**

## INTRODUCTION

Central to the Whole School Behaviour Policy, the school seeks to provide a place that is free from all forms of intimidation and abuse of personal and group power based upon the right of all members of the *school*:

- ◆ to feel emotionally and physically safe.
- ◆ to learn and teach without feeling unfair and undue pressure from others.
- ◆ to be treated with basic dignity and respect regardless of race, gender, religion, ability or disability.

All members of the school community - pupils, parents, staff, and school board - will be involved in making the school a safe place for all.

## Our Rights and Responsibilities

All action and reaction to Bullying in the school will be based on the following agreed specific rights and responsibilities:

These are our rights:	These are our Responsibilities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We all have a right to learn and teach without being disrupted and hassled by others.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We will care for each other and ourselves. We will not harm others either physically or emotionally and we will not allow others to do so either.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We all have a right to be spoken to in a fair and reasonable way.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We will speak to each other in a fair and reasonable way.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We all have a right to expect our possessions to be safe.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We will leave other peoples' possessions alone and not allow others to interfere with them.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We all have a right to aim to do our personal best.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We will leave others to work to do their personal best and not stand in their way.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We all have a right to a safe, clean environment in which to learn.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We will care for the place where we learn and our whole school environment.</li></ul>

## **IDENTIFYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

Bullying is the willful and conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone repeatedly and/or over a period of time to put someone into a state of anxiety.

The person who bullies may be the same age or older or younger than the victim. Their behaviour may be connected to their own personal and social problems.

### **Bully behaviour**

This can range from verbal insult to physical assault and can take the following forms:

- ◆ being called names.
- ◆ being teased.
- ◆ being pushed or pulled.
- ◆ being ignored and left out.
- ◆ having you bag or possessions taken and thrown about.
- ◆ being threatened.
- ◆ being hit or attacked.
- ◆ having rumours spread about you.
- ◆ being given 'dirty looks'.

### **Possible characteristics of the person being bullied**

Bully victims can be stereotyped, for example:

- ◆ they are new to the school.
- ◆ they have differences in speech, background or appearance.
- ◆ they suffer from low self esteem.
- ◆ they are regarded as being a 'swot'.
- ◆ they are nervous and anxious

Any excuse will do and if there is no real difference then bullies can invent one.

### **Some signs that bullying may be taking place**

- ◆ Be unwilling to come to school.
- ◆ Turn up late for certain classes.
- ◆ Have a pattern of absences.
- ◆ Have clothes or books destroyed.
- ◆ Become withdrawn or show feelings of isolation.
- ◆ Have their possessions go 'missing'.
- ◆ Continually 'lose' their pocket money.
- ◆ Refuse to say what is wrong.
- ◆ Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS**

- Be patient - make time to listen to your child.
- Ask questions but do it sensitively - don't interrogate.
- ◆ Show your child that you care. Be careful not to say or do anything that might make an already anxious or lonely child feel worse.
- ◆ Do not take any action before you discuss with your child what courses of action are possible - but make sure you do something.
- ◆ Do not make promises you cannot keep. It is very important to let your child know that they can trust you. If your child is in danger from an adult or another child you must act, even if they ask you to do nothing.
- ◆ Make sure that your child knows that they have done the right thing in telling you what has happened, that bullying is wrong and that those who are doing the bullying cannot be allowed to continue and must change their behaviour.

### **Avoid:**

- ◆ accepting bullying as part of growing up.
- ◆ making promises you cannot keep.

### **Let your child know:**

- ◆ that you are pleased that they have told you.
- ◆ that you believe them.
- ◆ that it is not their fault and that you are sorry it has happened.

### **Talking With Teachers**

- ◆ If someone in your family is being bullied at school you should talk to the child's guidance teacher or the appropriate Assistant Rector
- ◆ It is best to go into school if possible and make an appointment through the school office. If you cannot get into school, you could contact the guidance teacher by phone.

### **It might be helpful to take with you a list of things to remember:**

- ◆ Speak to the teacher as soon as possible. Say if the bullying has been going on for a long time.
- ◆ Do not exaggerate. Be honest and stick to the facts as you know them. Teachers need to know how serious the bullying is if they are to make judgements about the best course of action.

- ◆ Make a note of everything you know about the bullying before you speak to the teacher so that you do not forget to mention any important points.
- ◆ Remember that this may be the first time that the teacher has heard about the bullying and also, that your child may not have told you all the facts.

Find out what action the school intends to take.

- ◆ Arrange to contact the school again so that you can discuss any action that has been proposed.
- ◆ If you are not happy with the action proposed or taken, make an appointment to see the Rector.