DUNCLUG COLLEGE

Anti-Bullying Policy

Addressing the Bullying in Schools Act

(Northern Ireland) 2016

Version	Date	Revision Author	Summary of Changes
1.0	Sept 2021	Mr Oliver Pastoral Directors	Addressing the Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Revised Sept 2021 Adopted Governors: Nov 2021 Whole Staff Nov/Dec 2021 Review Date: June 2025

Anti-Bullying Policy

Contents

Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

School Ethos

"We provide a high quality, child-centred education in a caring environment, built upon good personal relationships and honest partnership. Through achievement and the development of mutual respect, all pupils are challenged and encouraged to become valued citizens".

1.1 All students attend school to learn, and in the process should feel safe and valued. However, from time to time there are barriers to progress which demand good pastoral care. As a school we promote the happiness and well-being of our pupils.

1.2 At Dunclug College 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.

Section 2 – Context
This policy has been informed and developed to meet legislative requirements and policy/guidance. This includes:

2.1 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

2.2 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)

2.3 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 (eg. school trip)
  - When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (eg. 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 & Aims

School Ethos

"We provide a high quality, child-centred education in a caring environment, built upon good personal relationships and honest partnership. Through achievement and the development of mutual respect, all pupils are challenged and encouraged to become valued citizens".

School Aims: In the pursuit of our ethos we specify the following aims:

3.1.i Personal
- Develop an inclusive environment where every individual, (students, Governors, staff and parents), makes a contribution and feels valued
- Develop in students an awareness of their inherent worth and potential for growth
- Provide challenges for every individual to achieve his/her potential or beyond the potential that has been identified: academically, vocationally and through all forms of enrichment
- Provide support to enable all who are potentially vulnerable or marginalised to progress
- Encourage students to develop increasing independence and confidence
- Encourage development of self-discipline and a sense of personal responsibility
- Facilitate the personal development of each staff member

3.2.ii Social
- Encourage all members of the school to work in partnership together for the growth, development and benefit of all
- Develop respect, tolerance and understanding of others
- Develop a sense of corporate responsibility in the life of the school

- Develop a community spirit

3.2.iii Cultural
- Work towards, and build, an inclusive culture, where every individual is heard and contributes, where difference is understood, valued and respected and where ideas are openly shared

3.2.iv Moral and Spiritual
- Model, promote and encourage high moral values
- Promote opportunities for spiritual growth as individuals

3.2.v Community
- Ensure the school becomes involved in the life and work of the community through effective links and planned involvement
- Prepare students to live, work and serve in their community and beyond.

In addition:
- We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying.
- We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and fees safes from bullying.
- 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 and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Section 4 – Consultation and Participation

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

4.1 Consultation with pupils
- Children are encouraged to develop sound relationships with others and taught to manage changing relationships. *(They will have their say about bullying through the School Council, LLW lessons and Tutorial).*
- They will be consulted regularly by questionnaire. *(Pupils discuss bullying issues through personal, social and health education and have the opportunity to respond through questionnaires and surveys, or through the student council).*
- Consultative workshops with pupils
- Class-based activities

4.2 Consultation with parents/carers
- Information events with parents/carers
- Consultative workshops with parents/carers
- Questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers (online/paper?)

- Engagement with parent groups, *(eg. Parents and pupils will be provided annually with documentation on school policy and procedure in relation to bullying behaviours and have opportunity to feed-back concerns, requests or ideas through a reply slip, at consultation meetings or at individual appointments).*

4.3 Consultation with staff, teaching and non-teaching
- Staff survey for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- Engagement activity for all staff, teaching and non-teaching – Scenarios
- Representative members of staff involved in writing anti-bullying policy – Pastoral Directors and Staff Consultation

4.4 Review
- The Policy is monitored throughout the year, evaluated at the end of each school year and refreshed for the following September.
- Full Review, following consultation with all involved (pupils, parents and staff) takes place every four years.

Section 5 – What is Bullying?

5.1 The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides schools with a legal definition which can be defined as:

Addressing Bullying in Schools 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.

5.2 Dunclug College recognises that all students attend school to learn, and in the process should feel safe and valued. However, from time to time there are barriers to progress which demand good pastoral care. As a school we promote the happiness and well-being of our pupils. To this end, ***bullying is any behaviour, usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.***

5.3 One-off Incidents

5.3.i When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the 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 School's Discipline and Positive Behaviour Policy. Where the school determines that an allegation of bullying does not meet the criteria of bullying behaviour, the incident will be viewed as socially unacceptable and will be addressed by the School's Discipline and Positive Behaviour Policy.

5.3.ii Repeated Incidents

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered as 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

Note: This list is not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

5.3.iii Motivations behind Bullying

At Dunclug College bullying is always unacceptable but difficulties are often complex to solve. Some people hide their worries out of fear that nothing can be done or that things will get worse. It is always better to tell someone you trust and get the matter sorted out.

There may be strong perceptions on either side that are not entirely accurate. Both sides must be willing to listen, to understand and if necessary to change. The problem is likely to worsen if ignored.

Petty squabbling is often misinterpreted as bullying – e.g. break-down in relationships between friends. Such disputes can be resolved with in-put and co-operation from all parties.

The Policy focuses upon: Preventing Bullying Behaviour, Reporting Bullying Behaviour, and Responding to Bullying Behaviour.

The various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

- Age
- Appearance
- Breakdown in peer relationships
- Community background
- Political affiliation
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

- Pregnancy
- Marital status
- Race
- Religion
- Disability / SEN
- Ability
- Looked After Child status
- Young Carer status

5.3.iv When discussing bullying behaviour

At Dunclug College we recognise bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussion 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

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

5.3.v 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

6.1 Firstly, we believe we aim to be pro-active in terms of preventing the occurrence of bullying behaviour. Dunclug College promotes mutual respect between all individuals. We encourage co-operative behaviour, teach children that bullying behaviours are wrong and deliver the message that it can be dealt with effectively in the following ways:

- through the pastoral system;
- raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the School's Discipline Policy and Promotion of Positive Behaviour;
- maintaining good home/school links – working together and maintaining common sense;
- through the wider and preventative curriculum;
- through development and preservation of quality relationships in all classrooms and tutorials;
- through whole school assembly, year assembly and class conference time;
- 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;
- by encouraging pupils to have a voice through the Student Council;
- through parents' evenings, by making parents aware of the need to report bullying behaviours and of their role of support/guidance toward the child experiencing/displaying bullying behaviours;
- involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity;
- through establishing a calm orderly and respectful enrolment both in and outside the classroom, including corridor, canteen, relaxation areas, recreational areas and playground;
- by encouraging children to report bullying behaviours which they see or suspect, even if it does not directly involve themselves;
- by vigilance in the classroom;
- by vigilance outside the classroom, e.g. before school, at breaks and after school, by providing good and consistent supervision, thus ensuring that there are places within the school where children feel completely safe;
- by making school an attractive and pleasant environment – both inside and outside, equipped with best possible facilities for pupils;
- by placing anti-bullying posters around school;
- participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities;
- through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g. mindfulness training);
- engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week;
- through careful supervision and duty systems each day;
- by listening to children who are experiencing bullying behaviour including those who perceive they are disliked and trying to build up their self-esteem and confidence;
- through PSHE, active engagement can develop the skills and the resilience to deal with prejudice such as sectarian attitudes and behaviours, homophobia, racism or negative attitudes to people with disabilities, whether they experience it directly or indirectly through the perceptions of others by teaching children (a) how to build good relationships (b) some strategies for dealing with the child experiencing/displaying bullying behaviours and (c) to understand the nature and causes of bullying behaviour;

- by dealing sensitively and effectively with all incidents of bullying behaviour which take place in school or on the way to and from school and making sure that all pupils know how school deals with the issue of bullying;
- by encouraging prefects and peer mentors to befriend and support other pupils;
- by encouraging a wide range of extra-curricular activities to motivate and energise pupils; and
- by training staff to confront matters related to bullying with a balance of sensitivity and efficiency.

6.2 Prevention of bullying behaviour on the way to and from the college

While many of the measures outlined in 6.1 above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, the school aims further to build upon this, specifically, on the journey to and from school. 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 to and from school;
- Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. This includes the implementation of peer monitoring systems on buses, trains and ferries, and for those walking;
- Regular engagement with transport providers (e.g. Translink, EA Transport, 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; and
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (e.g. staff duty at school gate/bus stops, where appropriate).

6.3 Prevention of bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication

To prevent 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. The school will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support their pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This will include:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through Tutorial/PD/LLW, 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) to support the promotion of key messages;
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year; and
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Filtering and Blocking Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Connected Devices Policy, etc.)

Section 7 – Responsibility

At Dunclug College we believe that everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school communities. Everyone in the 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 experienced bullying behaviour, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken;
- know how to seek support – internal and external; and
- resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- speak out and say NO to BULLYING. No one should suffer in silence;
- take personal and collective responsibility;
- be active not passive – speak out, tell or share incidents of bullying;
- know and understand the consequences of bullying type behaviour; and
- understand that we all contribute to the school ethos developing an inclusive environment where every individual is valued and respected.

Parents are encouraged to:

- watch for unusual behaviour which might be symptoms of bullying;
- encourage their child to report any instances of bullying to a member of staff;
- advise their child not to retaliate to any form of bullying;
- inform the school of instances of bullying even if their child is not involved;

- work in partnership with the College to ascertain the truth whilst pointing the implications for those displaying or experiencing bullying behaviour; and
- monitoring use of technology for use of internet, emailing or messaging.

Staff will:

- watch for, and be alert to, unusual behaviour which might be symptoms of bullying;
- encourage their pupils to report any instances of bullying to a member of staff;
- advise pupils not to retaliate to any form of bullying; and
- take reports of bullying seriously and deal with them promptly and effectively.

Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

8.1 Pupils Reporting a bullying Concern
Pupils are encouraged to speak to any member of Staff, Teaching or Non-Teaching:

- Verbally talking to a member of staff, teaching/non-teaching/friend
    - A trusted friend
    - Secretarial, Supervisory, Caretaking or Cleaning Staff
    - Parents
    - Prefects /reading partners/peer mentors
    - School Nurse
    - Subject teachers
    - Class tutors
    - Heads of Year
    - Senior teachers
    - Vice-Principal/Principal

- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
- By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

Note. The college encourages ANY pupil to raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Remember, you are not 'telling' on your friends or the pupils displaying/experiencing bullying behaviours but rather focusing efforts on 'getting help'. As such, all pupils should be encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is displayed/experienced by another.

8.2 Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern
Parents/Carers who have become aware of their child being unhappy in school should urgently contact the Head of Year in the first instance or either of the Senior Staff (Pastoral Director for Junior/Senior School), the Vice Principal or the Principal:

- Contact us promptly if you have concerns about bullying behaviour in the school;

- Encourage your child to trust in and use the Pastoral System in school. In particular, talk to someone about what is happening and how they feel;
- Encourage your child NOT to deal with bullying behaviour/s by displaying bullying behaviour/s;
- Expect to be contacted by the school in all individual cases of bullying, whether your child is experiencing/displaying bullying behaviour.

Please be patient. Effective solutions in issues of bullying take time and effort, rather than a quick fix. Encourage your child to tell us if they think someone else is experiencing/displaying bullying behaviour:

- Always respect one another;
- Always let good sense prevail;
- Bullying behaviour is learned behaviour so pupils can learn to stop!
- It **is** possible to counter bullying behaviour/s effectively in schools if we work together; and
- Effective communication is the key, always talk things through.

8.3 The College Response

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 will be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

9.1 All Staff, teaching and non-teaching, have a **collective responsibility** to be alert to signs of individuals displaying/experiencing bullying behaviour/s and to listen carefully if a child reports a concern. Dealing with bullying behaviour/s is very different from other disciplinary situations and requires sensitive handling. The adult who detects bullying or to whom it has been reported is in a position of trust from the pupil's viewpoint. *Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource the member of staff will*:

(i)	**Listen** with understanding and encourage accuracy;
(ii)	**Reassure** the pupil that the matter will be dealt with sensitively and give support;
(iii)	**Refer** the matter to the Head of Year, Senior teachers (Pastoral Directors for Junior & Senior School), Vice-Principal or Principal;
(iv)	**Continue** to support the pupil through your regular contacts or at agreed times, as necessary; and
(v)	**Check** that there is a plan of action which has been shared with staff and that careful records have been maintained.

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved:

- Meet with the child within 24hrs of receiving the referral – the pupil may also be asked to give a written account of the incident;

- Staff will ensure privacy and listen attentively and respectfully to the pupil's perception of what is happening to them;
- Parents of all pupils will be contacted promptly to inform them of the situation and the actions being taken;
- Make sure the pupil is safe in the immediate future;
- Reassure them that bullying behaviour will not be condoned in college, and explain that college staff must clarify the situation, considering detail and evidence, before engaging too quickly or acting unadvisedly;
- Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour;
- Complete a Bullying Assessment Form on the basis of this initial assessment;
- Clarify a timeline of facts and perceptions;
- Identify any themes or motivating factors;
- Identify the level of intervention required;
- Continue to maintain contact with parents of pupils involved;
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions; and
- Review, and if necessary, amend interventions.

In addition, staff will:
- Encourage all pupils to look critically at their own behaviour in any incident that had taken place eg "Is there anything I personally could have done differently?";
- Make arrangements to deal with the specific problem/s and explain the procedure that will be used carefully;
- Check regularly how the situation is progressing and set up a follow-up appointment at the end of each interview;
- Arrange, if appropriate, for Group Counselling with others who have experienced bullying behaviours, or put-downs of a similar nature; and
- Ensure that the plan is moving forward and that details are recorded confidentially and separately from other disciplinary matters in school.

9.2 Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action, for pupils displaying bullying behaviour will usually be applied in conjunction with counselling and other support strategies such as the Head of Year/Form Teacher/external agency. Any sanctions applied are a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the college. It may be appropriate apply sanctions at different stages of the process according to circumstances for example when:

- a pupil throws his/her weight around in a general way, such as kicking or punching indiscriminately;
- a pupil's behaviour is a threat to staff or other pupils;
- a pupil repeatedly displays bullying behaviour, however subtly, despite being offered a range of other support, including counselling, advice and use of behaviour support strategies;
- a pupil deliberately and repeatedly targets a child with a disability or vulnerability; and
- understanding has been reached but consequences still need to be applied as part of the process of moving forward.

Disciplinary action which may be taken include:

- verbal reprimand from Form Teacher/Head Year, Pastoral Director (junior/senior)/VP/Principal;
- creating space between the parties concerned by agreeing with parents that it is best to remain at home for a day, while a plan of action is in preparation;
- reflective work to complete at break-time, lunch time or at home;
- formal reprimand and requirement to sign a Contract/Agreement to indicate willingness to change/improve;
- withdrawal from enrichments which provide opportunity for displaying bullying behaviours;
- detention;
- temporary withdrawal from class;
- suspension for 1, 3 or 5 days (this could be extended); and
- pre-expulsion and expulsion.

At all stages taken there will always be emphasis on repairing and re-building and moving forward – getting on with the real business of school life – the learning!

The school will involve the parent fully in the disciplinary process as well as the follow-through work.

NOTE: Children who have experienced bullying behaviour will be supported to re-build lost self-esteem, to feel safe and to move forward. They will learn coping strategies to help them face future challenges. This support will be provided by the pastoral system, key staff, through the College Pathways Programme or External Agencies.

- Children who display bullying behaviour will be given opportunity to identify the underlying cause of their behaviour and access to the appropriate help. They will learn that:

  (a) there are ways to deal with their problems or concerns other than through aggression or by using power over other people;
  (b) they **can** change;
  (c) they will get support while change is taking place; and
  (d) there are consequences for all behaviours. In particular, *those which are repeated, which are carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.* (Refer to Discipline and Positive Behaviour Policy)

Where the college determines that an allegation of bullying does not meet the criteria of bullying behaviour, the incident will be viewed as socially unacceptable and will be addressed by the College Discipline and Positive Behaviour Policy.

The greatest consequence can be loss of trust from peers, it will be essential to be willing to repair trust and to engage in support programmes provided.

9.3 The College Response
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 will be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 10 – Recording

10.1 The college will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns using the BCAF (Bullying Concern Assessment Form), completed by the Bullying Response Team, including:

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

Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of college staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance. 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 college.

Section 11 – Level of Intervention

11.1 Choosing an Appropriate Intervention
When children and young people are involved in incidents of bullying, adults need to intervene. In practice there is a wide range of possible interventions available and there are significant differences in these in terms of the purpose of the intervention and the needs being addressed.

This Anti-Bullying policy contains a description of the different interventions which will be used to respond to a bullying situation. There is no best method in the sense that one is always preferable. Remember, the main aim of any intervention is to RESPOND to the bullying that is taking place, RESOLVE the concern and RESTORE the well-being of all those involved.

In selecting an intervention, the school will take account of:

- The level of severity, using this as a guide to select appropriate intervention(s);
- The legal status of the act;
- The age and ability of those involved;
- Whether an individual pupil or a group is involved;
- The level of staff agreement, confidence and competence in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach;
- The agreement and support of the parents/carers in adopting a restorative, behaviour changing approach;
- Whether the pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour acknowledge(s) the unacceptable behaviour and can be enabled to feel empathy for the pupil experiencing bullying, and act appropriately;
- The willingness to engage in a group intervention such as the Support Group Method;

- Whether it is realistic to expect that the bullied pupil can be strengthened adequately to deal with the situation; and
- Whether or not the pupil experiencing bullying has acted provocatively.

11.2 Level 1 Intervention - Low Level Bullying Behaviour
Interventions at Level 1 are to help individuals to recognise/reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and to "get them back on track" while listening to and supporting/strengthening the pupil(s) experiencing bullying. NEVER ignore low level bullying behaviour.

Staff will:
- Explain the inappropriateness of the behaviour in line with college values;
- Identify possible consequences if the bullying behaviour continues;
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the bullied pupil;
- Talk with the pupil being bullied to explore whether he/she has in any way provoked the bullying behaviour;
- Help the bullied pupil to identify ways in which he/she may be strengthened and supported, e.g. peer support;
- Encourage reparation to be made, if appropriate;
- Monitor the situation carefully; and
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates.

11.3 Level 2 Interventions - Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviour
While interventions at Level 2 involve continuing with the above, there is shift from individual support to group interventions. To be effective small group work needs:

- The consent and involvement of the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour;
- To be planned and timetabled, session length dependent on age and ability;
- Parental / carer consent and agreement from participating pupils;
- Carefully selected group membership;
- To take place in a suitable and comfortable environment;
- To be uninterrupted;
- To be facilitated in a positive manner;
- Structured and focused activities using active learning approaches to stimulate discussion and debate amongst members and develop group identity;
- Decision and outcomes to be agreed and recorded, e.g. on a flipchart;
- To facilitate the development of empathy amongst pupils;
- A solution focused approach to the situation;
- To provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility;
- Regular meetings of the group;
- Regular meetings with the bullied pupil to assess ongoing effectiveness of agreed actions; and
- To ensure regular feedback is given on agreed actions.

11.3 Level 3 Interventions - Complex Bullying Behaviour
Interventions at Level 3 will often involve the Head of Year, the Pastoral Director and The Teacher Leader for the Bullying Response Team in collaboration with pupil(s) and parents to determine the

way forward in affecting change. The school will use their individual Risk Assessment procedures which will determine a plan of intervention and risk management that will be communicated to all.

This planning may occur through a multi-agency discussion, involving EA Services and other external support agencies. The manner in which teachers and others are involved in planning and how they are kept informed about the implementation of the plans will vary.

Bullying at this level often involves complex group dynamics, where several roles are evident, such as those displaying bullying behaviour, bystanders and pupils experiencing bullying. Consequently, interventions may require one-to-one meetings, small group work and whole class involvement. These will often require group interventions as discussed in Level 2, along with individual support and strength building programmes.

11.4 Level 4 Interventions - High Risk Bullying Behaviour
Bullying behaviours assessed as Level 4 are:

- Severe and involve a significant threat to the safety and welfare of any or all of the pupils involved;
- Such severe bullying concerns may be new or may have proved resistant to earlier school interventions and have now been assessed as high risk;
- Incidents at this level must be assessed in relation to the risk posed to any/all of the pupils involved; and
- The Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Procedures will need to be invoked – this may invoke the College Discipline and Positive Behaviour Policy.

In addition to Safeguarding Procedures and Practices including referral to External Support Services, the college interventions at Level 4 should continue to implement interventions detailed at Level 3 as appropriate.

Section 12 – Professional Development of Staff

12.1 Dunclug College recognises the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff. The college will ensure that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions *(Staff Training Days/School Development Days with dedicated sessions)*

- the college will monitor the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc. *(Monitoring and Evaluating)*
- the college will ensure that opportunities for Safeguarding Training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching *(Staff Training Days/School Development Days with dedicated sessions)*
- the college will ensure CPD records will be kept and updated regularly *(All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation)*

Section 13 – Monitoring and Review of Policy

13.1 To monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors will:

- 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; and
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour.

In addition:

- Parents and pupils will be provided annually with documentation on school policy and procedure in relation to bullying and have opportunity to feed-back concerns, requests or ideas through a reply slip, at consultation meetings or at individual appointments.
- The Policy is monitored throughout the year, evaluated at the end of each school year and refreshed for the following September.
- Full Review, following consultation with all involved (pupils, parents and staff) takes place every four years.

Note. The policy will be reviewed following any incident which highlight 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 June 2024.

Section 14 – Links to Other Policies

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

- The College Discipline Policy incorporating the promotion of positive behaviour
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct

Appendix – Where to find help?
Support Services

National Child Protection Helpline	**Tel:** 0800 800 500
Childline	**Tel:** 0800 1111 (under 18)
Samaritans	**Tel:** 028 256 50000
Contact 'Family Works' Counselling Service	**Tel:** 028 9182 1721
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)	**Tel:** 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
Contact NI **Lifeline**	**Tel:** 0808 808 8000 www.contact.org
NIABF	http://www.endbullying.org.uk
Think You Know	www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

(advice about practical aspects of the internet)

Chat Danger	www.chatdanger.com

(potential dangers of interactive online services such as chat, instant messaging, email and mobiles)

Centre for Exploitation and Online Protection	www.ceop.gov.uk

(facility to report abuse on the internet)

Urzone website	www.urzone.com

(Sponsored by the PSNI – providing support on a range of issues affecting young people.)