

# **Dromin National School**



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

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## **Introduction**

This anti-bullying policy operates in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour.

We believe that our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Respect for ourselves and for others forms the basis of our Code of Behaviour and therefore bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated.

The school has a central role in the children's' social moral development just as it does in their academic development. In school, we work towards standards of behaviour based on the basic principles of honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility. The individuality of each child needs to be accommodated while at the same time acknowledging the right of every child to education in a disruption free environment.

Bullying is defined as repeated aggression, whether verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying include physical aggression, damage to property, intimidation, isolation, name-calling, taunting or 'slagging'. Child to child bullying, teacher to child, intra staff bullying, parent to staff and parent to child bullying (including a child other than their own) are examples of the areas where bullying may occur.

Isolated instances of aggressive behaviour, which would be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour, would not be described as bullying. However when the behaviour is systematic and on-going, it is bullying.

Any alleged incident of bullying will be investigated fully. The school acknowledges that there are three parties involved in bullying – those who bully, those who are bullied and those who witness the bullying. Staff and teachers bear this in mind when dealing with bullying incidences and try to support and work with all parties involved.

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## **Aims**

1. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, staff, pupils and parents/guardians.
2. To ensure proper supervision and monitoring measures.
3. To create a school ethos which encourages positive behaviour among members of the school community.
4. To encourage children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour promptly.
5. To foster a school ethos of mutual and self-respect
6. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour
7. To outline, promote and raise awareness of preventative approaches that can be used in response to reported incidences of bullying
8. To develop a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour
9. To outline procedures for noting and reporting instances of bullying behaviour

10. To outline procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

### **As a Pupil**

*What to do if you are being bullied.*

1. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
2. Be proud of who you are.
3. Try not to show that you are upset. A bully thrives on someone's fear.
4. Generally it is best to tell a teacher straight away. The teachers will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and not make things worse for the victim.
5. Buddy system – Tell a friend what is happening.
6. Write down what has happened.

### **If you know someone is being bullied:**

1. Take action. Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully.
2. If you feel you cannot get involved tell a teacher immediately. They have ways of dealing with a bully without getting you into trouble.

### **As a Parent/Guardian**

1. Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire and listen to how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with.
2. If you feel your child has been a victim/perpetrator of bullying behaviour inform the school immediately.
3. Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not their fault.
4. Make sure your child is aware of the school policy concerning bullying.

### **As a School**

*We will:*

1. Encourage the children to respect themselves and others at all times.
2. Use any opportunity to discuss bullying and the appropriate way to behave towards each other eg. Stay Safe, Walk Tall religion lessons.

3. Deal sensitively with and investigate thoroughly any alleged incident.
4. Deal firmly, fairly and promptly with any complaint involving all relevant parties.
5. Have a firm but fair discipline structure.
6. Encourage the children to form positive attitudes towards other people.
7. Treat bullying as a serious offence.
8. Keep a written record of our discussions with those involved.

### **Action to be taken when bullying is suspected.**

1. We will talk to
  - a) suspected victim
  - b) suspected bully
  - c) any witnesses
2. We will support all parties by:
  - a) Offering him/her an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with his/her teacher.
  - b) Informing the victim's parents/guardians and explain actions being taken and the reason for them.
  - c) Discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.
  - d) Offering continuing support.
  - e) Taking one or more of the disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying.

### **Disciplinary Steps**

1. The bully will be warned officially to stop offending.
2. Temporary separation from peers.
3. Informing the bully's parents/guardians.
  - a) Explain actions being taken and the reasons for them.
  - b) Discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.
4. Parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet with the Chairman of the Board of Management and the Principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future, the pupil may have to be suspended for a temporary period.

## **Sanctions**

It is the duty of the school to provide a safe environment for all the children. Should the above interventions fail and the bullying continue, a programme of appropriate sanctions may be implemented by the Principal in consultation with the parents and Board of Management. Sanctions implemented aim to encourage positive behaviour and support the self esteem of the child. These sanctions may include a period of suspension during which there will be ongoing consultation with the parents to decide on appropriate action(s) to be taken in the best interests of the child. Suspension for any period of time will be reported in writing by the Principal to the Chair of the Board of Management.

## **Responsibility of Adults**

The adults encountered by the children at school have an important responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in their dealings with the children and with each other, as their example has an important influence on the children. As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations
- Promote, through example, honesty and courtesy
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all

## **Bullying by Adults**

- In the case of **intra-staff bullying**, Dromin National School will adopt the procedures outlined in Section C (c2) of the INTO booklet: 'Working Together: Procedures and Policies for Positive Staff Relations'. A copy of this document is available for free download on the INTO website.
- In the case of **Teacher – Child bullying**, a complaint should in the first instance be raised with the teacher in question by the parent/guardian of the child if possible and then if necessary referred to the Principal. Where it has not been possible to agree a framework for resolution, the matter should be referred in writing by both parties to the Board of Management for investigation.
- In the case of **Parent – Teacher** bullying, the Principal should be informed in the first instance, and if deemed necessary the Board of Management should subsequently be informed in writing.
- In the case of **Parent/Visitor to the school – Child** bullying, the complaint should be referred in the first instance to the child's class teacher and subsequently to the Principal if unresolved.
- In the case of **Principal – Parent/ Child** bullying, the matter should be raised with the Principal if possible, or referred to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

## **School Rules**

1. Respect for others and for school property forms the basis of our Code of Behaviour. Pupils should behave with courtesy and good manners towards all other members of the school community.
2. Once the child enters the school premises at 9.20am, he/she may not leave again without permission. If a parent/guardian wishes a child to leave during school hours it is essential that the class teacher receives such a request in writing.
3. During playtime pupils are expected to behave in a manner which will not hurt themselves or another child or cause damage to school property.
4. All children are expected to line up and walk into class in an orderly fashion at the end of playtime.
5. Pupils are expected to pay close attention to class-work and to co-operate with the teacher in his/her work.
6. Homework must be completed every night and the homework signed by a parent/guardian.
7. Children are expected to walk and sit quietly in the hall area.

**This policy will be reviewed and amended if necessary, on a regular basis.**

### **Ratification**

**This policy was ratified by the B.O.M. of Dromin N.S. on \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson B.O.M.**