

Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide - Anti-Bullying Policy

Revision: 1

Effective date: 2020-Dec-13

1. Introduction

This Policy section is written with the intent of protecting our students from bullying in all forms as well as establishing clear and consistent protocols to be followed should bullying occur.

2. Legislation

The Province of Nova Scotia has several laws and regulations to deal with bullying. The following are links to government and independent resources regarding anti-bullying laws and policy of the government, as well as related scholarship:

[Bullying & Cyberbullying](#)

[PREVNet | Canada's authority on bullying prevention - Research and Resources](#)
[Bullying Policy & Legislation for Nova Scotia](#)

3. Responsibilities of Staff and The School

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of the working group to let the school community know about the Anti-Bullying provisions that are in place in the school by circulating this policy document as well as addressing the issue of bullying and our strategies to combat it during orientations.
- 3.2. It is the responsibility of the teacher to enforce the anti bullying policy and report all incidents to the working group.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of parents and children to report incidents of bullying to the Teacher.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of all students to follow the Anti-Bullying policy.

4. Definition of bullying

- 4.1. Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- 4.2. Bullying can include name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, theft, producing offensive graffiti, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and/or untruthful rumours.

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- 4.3. This policy extends to the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, known as online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- 4.4. Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer-on-peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children's emotional development.
- 4.5. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:
 - Bullying related to physical appearance
 - Bullying of young carers, children in foster care or otherwise related to home circumstances
 - Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
 - Physical bullying
 - Emotional bullying
 - Sexual bullying
 - Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
 - Prejudicial bullying (against people/students with protected characteristics):
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents

5. Ethos

- 5.1. Our School community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals. It can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. Therefore by preventing and overcoming bullying our school can help to create a safe environment, where students are able to learn and fulfil their potential.
- 5.2. The working group will monitor and review our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis and supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.

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- 5.3. Our school recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- 5.4. The school will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- 5.5. The school community will work to ensure our students are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively and that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy. All members of the community will work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- 5.6. We recognize the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
- 5.7. Our school will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy and will seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere, utilising support from government and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

6. Responding to bullying

- 6.1. The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:
 - 6.1.1. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
 - 6.1.2. The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate. Here appropriate support means support that is given equitably to a student who is in need of it as a result of bullying behaviour. This may include but is not limited to the following:
 - The teacher listening to all children and being vigilant of bullying behaviours.

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- Intervention led by the teacher with the support of parent(s)/guardian(s) to stop bullying behaviour.
 - Listening to what the child who has experienced bullying has to say about the event(s).
 - Providing resources for the child and their parents to support the child post bullying events.
 - Contacting outside authorities or personnel if it is seen to be necessary for the safety of the child(ren).
- 6.1.3. The headteacher or another member of leadership staff or the working group will talk to all parties involved.
- 6.1.4. The working group will be informed of all bullying issues where there are concerns for a child's safety.
- 6.1.5. The headteacher or working group will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- 6.1.6. The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- 6.1.7. Penalties and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned on an individual basis.
- 6.1.8. If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- 6.1.9. Where the bullying of or by students takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the working group will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing penalties in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- 6.1.10. A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

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- 6.2. Cyberbullying, when responding to cyberbullying concerns the school will:
- 6.2.1. Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified, providing appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and address the incident with the person who carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
 - 6.2.2. Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (e.g. screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
 - 6.2.3. Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - (a) Looking at use of the school electronics or other systems;
 - (b) Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - (c) Contacting the service provider (internet, phone, social media etc.) and the police, if necessary.
 - 6.2.4. Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assisting in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - (a) Submitting reports and evidence of bullying to a service provider or local authorities, as appropriate, to remove content if individuals involved are unable to be identified, or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - (b) Confiscating and searching students' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law.
 - (c) Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
 - (d) Ensuring that penalties are given to the person(s) responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
 - (e) Informing the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
 - (f) Providing information to staff and students regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;

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- helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.
Supporting students (Amend as appropriate)

6.3. Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- 6.3.1. Reassuring the student and providing continuous compassionate support.
- 6.3.2. Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, or a member of staff of their choice.
- 6.3.3. Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- 6.3.4. Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- 6.3.5. Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- 6.3.6. Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.
- 6.3.7. When the situation warrants, children who have been bullied will be made aware of appropriate community mental health services.

6.4. Students who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

- 6.4.1. Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change. Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- 6.4.2. Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- 6.4.3. If the incident occurred online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- 6.4.4. Penalties, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy; this may

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include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and suspension or expulsion.

- 6.4.5. Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or any other appropriate organization. .

7. Supporting adults

- 7.1. Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by students, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.
- 7.2. Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:
- 7.2.1. Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with a designated senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
 - 7.2.2. Advising the person who reported being bullied to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
 - 7.2.3. Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy.
 - 7.2.4. Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
 - 7.2.5. Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
 - 7.2.6. Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.
- 7.3. Adults reported to have bullied will be addressed by:
- 7.3.1. Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Principal to establish the concern.

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- 7.3.2. Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and directing grievances to the school's official complaints procedures.
- 7.3.3. If online, requesting that content be removed.
- 7.3.4. Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

8. Preventing bullying

- 8.1. The whole school community will:
 - 8.1.1. Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
 - 8.1.2. Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer on peer abuse).
 - 8.1.3. Recognises the potential for children with special education needs and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
 - 8.1.4. Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as foster children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
 - 8.1.5. Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
 - 8.1.6. Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
 - 8.1.7. Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
 - 8.1.8. Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
 - 8.1.9. Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

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9. Policy and Support

- 9.1. The whole school community will:
 - 9.1.1. Provide a range of approaches for students, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
 - 9.1.2. Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
 - 9.1.3. Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves or affects students, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
 - 9.1.4. Implement appropriate disciplinary penalties; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
 - 9.1.5. Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.
- 9.2. Education and Training: The school community will:
 - 9.2.1. Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
 - 9.2.2. Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
 - 9.2.3. Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
 - 9.2.4. Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.

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- 9.2.5. Provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.
- 9.3. Involvement of students, we will:
 - 9.3.1. Involve students in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
 - 9.3.2. Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of Bullying.
 - 9.3.3. Ensure that all students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
 - 9.3.4. Ensure that all students are aware of the range of penalties which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
 - 9.3.5. Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
 - 9.3.6. Listen to students and their concerns when designing lessons and educating on bullying.
 - 9.3.7. Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- 9.4. Regarding involvement and liaison with parents and carers we will:
 - 9.4.1. Take steps to involve parents and carers in develop policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying. Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
 - 9.4.2. Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
 - 9.4.3. Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
 - 9.4.4. Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive

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behaviour for students, both on and offline.

- 9.4.5. Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

10. Monitoring and review

- 10.1. The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- 10.2. Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- 10.3. The headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- 10.4. The headteacher will report on a regular basis to the working group on incidents of bullying, including outcomes of past incidents.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1. It is the hope of the working group that these above policies will act in a way that effectively protects students from bullying.
- 11.2. To ensure effectiveness, this policy will be reviewed at least annually, and whenever required to ensure that it is up to date.

Revision History & Approval

Revision	Date	Approved by
1	2020-Dec-13	Working Group