**Anti Bullying Policy**

We respond to the issue of bullying very seriously whether amongst children or adults, and have strict procedures that will be adhered to should there be any evidence within our pre and after school service.

**What is bullying?**

Bullying is not always easy to define here is some information on recognizing the ***Difference between Normal Peer Conflict and Bullying.***

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| **Normal Peer Conflict** | **Bullying** |
| Equal power or friends | Imbalance of power; not friends |
| Happens occasionally | Repeated negative actions |
| Accidental | Purposeful |
| Not serious | Serious with threat of physical or emotional harm |
| Equal emotional reaction | Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully |
| Not seeking power or attention | Seeking power, control, or material things |
| Not trying to get something | Attempt to gain material things or power |
| Remorse - will take responsibility | No remorse - blames victim |
| Effort to solve problem | No effort to solve problem |

This policy is designed to support our Positive behaviour policy, equal opportunities and anti discrimination policies.

Bullying is about a pre-meditated act, which relies on a stage of cognitive development in order to think the process through, and occurs generally in children 5 years and over.

**Aims and Objectives**

* Bullying is wrong and is damaging to individual people. We proactively implement policies and procedures to prevent this, by developing a setting in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
* We aim to deliver a safe and secure environment where all children can play and learn without fear or anxiety.
* This policy aims to produce a consistent response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
* We aim to make all those connected with the nursery aware of our opposition to bullying and staff have a responsibility to eradicate bullying in our nursery.
* We do not tolerate any kind of bullying as stated above on any grounds whatsoever, and support all parties involved to gain a full understanding of our ethos.

**Rough and Tumble Play**

Within Úlla Beag we acknowledge the need to recognise rough and tumble play as distinct from inappropriate or aggressive behaviour. Television or films, which include superheroes, often influence young children or weapon play and they will mimic this behaviour through their play. We endorse the following strategies to manage this kind of play:

* Recognise that this is pro-social play rather than aggressive
* Set boundaries for the games to be set out in
* Use planning opportunities to discuss the concept of 'good' and 'bad'.
* Support the play to find alternative solutions to weapon play, exploring different scenarios.

**Hurtful Behaviour**

Very young children are 'egocentric' which means that they put their own feelings before others, and even the most considerate child will have the occasional outburst due to frustration, anger or over exuberance. We acknowledge that this is a developmental area that needs to be nurtured and supported and that very young children do not intentionally wish to cause hurt. If hurtful comments are made, our strategies are:

* To recognise that very young children are not always able to manage their own feelings and deliver them appropriately
* Assist in this management to support their biological and cognitive development.
* Offer support to both parties and to discuss the issues through play, story times and circle time activities.

**Anti - Bullying Procedure**

The role of the manager

* It is the responsibility of the manager to implement Úlla Beag’s Anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (paid/unpaid) are aware of the policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying.
* The manger ensures that all children begin to learn that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour at Úlla Beag. The manager draws the attention of everyone to this fact through staff meetings and monitoring that this is being implemented on a regular basis.
* The manager ensures that all staff is in receipt of sufficient training to be equipped to deal with any incidents of bullying.
* The manager sets the climate of mutual support and praise for successes, so making bullying less likely. When people feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming setting, bullying is far less likely to occur.

The role of staff

* Staff take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. A record is kept of all incidents of bullying that happen in the nursery and these are shard with the manager.
* If staff witnesses an act of bullying they do all they can to support the person or persons who are being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the manager, the key worker informs the child's parent.
* For all incidents an incident form should be completed. We record all incidents of bullying that occur .. If bullying is sustained, in conjunction with the parents we will move forward to our behavioural Modification Programme, which supports the child to improve their behaviour.

The role of parents

* Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the nursery manager immediately.
* Parents have a responsibility to support the nursery's anti bullying policy and actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the nursery.
* Parents are expected to help develop their child's social skills at all times, in support of the nursery ethos.

Monitoring and Review

* This policy is monitored regularly by the manager.
* The Manager is currently undergoing training for Certification in Bullying and Cyber bullying as part of an Art; Play; Drama, Music & Bibliotherapy Clinical Specialist Exam.
* On completion of this in June 2011 we will be designing our own in house anti bullying training.

