

Donabate-Portrane



Educate Together

Tackling Homophobia

'Everyone is an insider, there are no outsiders - whatever their beliefs, whatever their colour, gender or sexuality.'

Archbishop Desmond Tutu- February 2004

1. Zero tolerance to homophobic language.

Children and young people frequently use the word 'gay' as a negative term. While this term is used derisively many do not regard it as homophobic because it is not always directed at a person perceived to be homosexual. Many children repeat language without really understanding what it means.

All Staff Members should challenge the pejorative use of the word 'gay' and other similar words. This use of language must be challenged and students asked to reflect on the formation of stereotypes and the roots of prejudice.

- ✓ Communicate clearly to the child that we do not use language like this in our school community.
- ✓ Ask the child if he/she understands what he/she is saying.
- ✓ If the child doesn't know what 'gay' means explain that 'gay' is an adjective that describes a person who loves someone else of the same sex. Put it in the context of all the different types of people in the world - use age appropriate language.
- ✓ Explain that using the word 'gay' negatively/ derisively is using homophobic language and helps to spread hatred and makes some people feel isolated.

2. Record Incidents

Staff are requested to write down any incidents that involve homophobic language or teasing. These incidents should be referred to the Principal. Episodes should be given the same status and monitored in the same way as racist incidents.

2. Policy

This issue will be dealt with under a few different policies -namely Anti Bullying, Adult Anti Bullying and Positive Behaviour.

3. Curriculum

This issue will be covered in both SPHE and Learn Together. Rather than focussing on homosexuality as a discrete topic it will be covered in the context of diversity and equality in both SPHE and Learn Together.

4. Resources

A number of websites offer helpful suggestions/lesson plans etc for covering homophobia including www.tacklehomophobia.com
www.belongto.org www.stonewall.org.uk

A number of books have been purchased for the school.