Homophobic bullying is "a moral outrage, a grave violation of human rights and a public health crisis."

**UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon**

Schools have the duty to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying and they cannot discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation against a student or teacher. At Durham Trinity School & Sports College we will not tolerate any form of bullying.

Government legislation means that schools have to be proactive in preventing homophobic bullying and make all children and young people feel included.

**Education and Inspections Act 2006**

Teachers have a legal duty to ensure homophobic bullying is dealt with in schools. Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 head teachers must, with the advice and guidance of governors and the assistance of school staff, identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect for others and self-discipline amongst pupils and to prevent all forms of bullying.

**Single Equality Act 2010 and Public Duty**

The Single Equality Act and the Public Duty mean that schools and other public bodies have to be more proactive and to go beyond non-discrimination by advancing equality.

Any hostile or offensive action against lesbians, gay males, bisexual or transgender people, or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender can be classed as homophobic bullying.

**Children and young people's legal rights**

In July 2000, the DFES issued the new statutory guidelines in Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, which includes the requirement that schools must provide for the needs of young gay men and lesbians.

Section 1.30 states:

'It is up to schools to make sure that the needs of all pupils are met in their programmes. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs.'
Section 1.32 states:

'Schools need to be able to deal with homophobic bullying. Guidance issued by the Department (Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Curricular 10/99) dealt with the unacceptability of and emotional distress and harm caused by bullying in whatever form - be it racial, as a result of a pupil's appearance, related to sexual orientation or for any other reason.'

This policy upholds the principles as defined in Publication ‘Stand Up for Us’ documentation 2004. It also upholds guidelines in ‘Every Child Matters 2004’. The principle outcomes for all children are:

- Being physically and mentally healthy
- Staying safe and being protected from harm and neglect
  - Enjoying and achieving
  - Making a positive contribution by being positively involved in the community and society.
  - Economic wellbeing.

This policy has been developed as part of our anti-bullying policy. Other relevant policies are Behaviour Management, Equal Opportunities, Cyber Bullying, Anti-Bullying, PSHE and Citizenship.

At Durham Trinity School & Sports College we believe all staff, parents, carers, children and all adults in school should be treated with respect and feel safe within their own and their families' identities. All have a right to receive an education free from humiliation, oppression or personal abuse including that relating to their sexual identities.

**Aims of Policy**

At Durham Trinity School & Sports College we aim to:

- Promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment and therefor allow all pupils and staff irrespective of their sexual orientation to achieve and have the self-respect which they deserve while retaining the integrity of their own identities.
- Make pupils aware of the meaning of homophobia and to provide an environment where school becomes effective in reducing prejudice and raising self-esteem.
- Contribute towards a sense of citizenship and prepare children for living in diverse societies.
- Promote an understanding of the variety of community and personal cultures, valuing the contributions that each individual can make to society.
- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for pupils, staff and visitors.
- Provide an environment where homophobic assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are always challenged.
• Provide a curriculum which emphasizes the positive aspects of all cultures and to give children the confidence to challenge homophobia and to know that all forms of bullying and prejudice can and must be eradicated.
• Recognise that pupils themselves and their families and carers are often the most important resource for the school and that their experiences are valued and shared.
• Celebrate difference

**What is homophobic bullying?**

Homophobia bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bi-sexual.

**Who experiences homophobic bullying?**

• Young people who are lesbian, gay or bi-sexual or are thought to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual.
• Young people who are different in some way-who may not act like other girls or boys.
• Young people who have gay friend or family or whose parents or carers are gay.
• Teachers or non-teaching staff who may or may not be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual

**Actions might include:**

• Verbal abuse – spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that someone or something is inferior for being gay. Name calling.
• Physical abuse – hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault and threatening behaviour.
• Cyberbullying – spreading rumours online or excluding them. Text messaging, video and picture messaging.

At Durham Trinity School & Sports College we will address all incidents of bullying as stated in our Anti-Bullying Policy. Incidents will be dealt with immediately.

Homophobic bullying will be addressed at our school in the following way:

• We will acknowledge and identify the problems of all sorts of bullying even if some forms are not obviously visible.
• We will ensure that our policy is understood by all members of our school and the wider community. All incidents will be dealt with immediately.
• We will promote a positive social environment where all differences are celebrated.
• We will ensure all staff will deal with homophobic bullying incidents with confidence.
• At DTS&SC we will provide information and support for pupils and staff.
• We will aim to include addressing anti-bullying including homophobic bullying in curriculum planning. Planning will show balance and resources will reflect this.
• We will use external expertise where appropriate and offer pupils and staff information regarding support agencies.
• We will use positive role models.
• We will not make assumptions that all pupils and staff are heterosexual. We will not assume that all pupils experiencing homophobic are gay.
• We will celebrate achievement.
• We will celebrate diversity and ensure our school population is a welcoming environment for all visitors.

Summary
At Durham Trinity School & Sports College we will ensure we are a welcoming environment for all. Diversity will be celebrated and any form of bullying will be dealt with immediately, following procedures stated in our Anti-Bullying Policy. Our pupils will be educated in a safe environment where all are valued.

Reference
Stonewall
Peter Tatchell Foundation
The Rainbow Project
UNESCO
Save the Children

J O’Neill September 2014