



Airyhall School Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

All children and young people should expect to feel valued, respected, and safe, free from bullying behaviour. This document establishes a set of guidelines for our school which provide support for children and young people around our anti-bullying policy and procedures.

At Airyhall school, we promote a culture of respectful relationships between all staff, parents and children and young people.

Aims

- To promote an ethos of inclusion and positive behaviour and to make it clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour which will not be tolerated.
- To create an open culture where pupils feel free to report possible incidents of bullying without fear of repercussion
- To equip pupils with skills which will help them to deal with bullying
- To assist the person who chooses to bully to resolve issues that they have

Strategy and Legislation that sits behind our policy

These guidelines are set within a number of local and national strategies and legislation, as set out below-

The Human Rights Act 1998

- Places a public duty on authorities to carry out their functions in a matter that is compatible with the right to life, the prohibition of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to respect for private and family life, the right to education.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Is concerned with the promotion and upholding of the rights of children and young people - a number of articles are relevant to these guidelines
 - Article 3 – the best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect them
 - Article 12 – every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously
 - Article 19 - Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse. and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.
 - Article 29 – education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment
- Aberdeen City Council has a partnership with Unicef UK to promote the Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) in all our schools. This promotes the values and principles of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and supports an ethos of meaningful pupil participation, respect and positive relationships.

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- The protected characteristics are:-:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Sex (Gender)
 - Gender reassignment (Transgender)
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009

- Provides the legal framework underpinning the system for supporting children and young people who have additional support needs. Children or young people may require additional support for a variety of reasons and may include those who are bullied at school. These needs can be temporary or transient.

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006

- Promotes the future involvement of parents in their children's education and in the development plans for schools. This act puts a responsibility on schools, family and communities to address discrimination with a duty to actively promote equality and promote children's health, wellbeing and development

The Children and Young People's Act (Scotland) 2014 places GIRFEC – Getting It Right For Every Child - in statute

- GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people underpinned by shared principles and values in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is about how practitioners across all services for children and adults meet the needs of children and young people, working together where necessary to ensure they reach their full potential. It promotes a shared approach and accountability that:
 - Builds solutions with and around children, young people and families.
 - Enables children and young people to get the help they need when they need it.
 - Supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice.
 - Involves working together to make things better.
- *SHANARRI* - the 8 indicators of wellbeing considered the basic requirements for all children and young people to grow and develop and reach their full potential: *safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.*

Definition of Bullying

The organisation 'respectme' is Scotland's anti-bullying service. They define bullying as:-

'Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.'

(respectme, 2015).

Points to note

- There does not need to be intent
- The behaviour does not need to be persistent, but the threat can be sustained
- Bullying is behaviour and impact – never one on its own
- Bullying occurs within the context of relationships
- Bullying can be verbal, social, physical, emotional or prejudice based
- It is best to avoid labelling and using terms such as 'bully' and 'victim'

In developing this policy for our school we-

- Sought the views of our young people through engagement with The Pupil Council and RRS Group as we are aware that our policy is likely to have most impact if children and young people are involved in the design and implementation of it.
- Parents and Carers also contributed to the writing of the policy through engagement with the Parent Council.
- We engaged with all school staff around the policy to ensure that everyone has an input in the formulation of this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Staff**

All school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a duty to report bullying, to be vigilant to the signs of bullying and to play an active role in the school's measures to prevent bullying. If staff are aware of bullying, they should reassure the pupils involved and inform their class teacher.

Role of the Class Teacher

- foster an ethos of inclusion in the classroom
- promote positive attitudes in the classroom and school
- involve all pupils in regular discussion of the effects of bullying
- encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour
- allow opportunities for pupils to express any concerns
- promote the ethos of a Rights Respecting School

Role of the Pupil Support Assistant

- aim to ensure each child is included
- aim to involve pupils in cooperative play
- encourage children to talk about any concerns
- treat any bullying concern seriously
- praise children when they behave well
- support P7 Buddies and Young Sports Leaders
- promote the ethos of a Rights Respecting School

- **Senior Staff**

The Senior Leadership Team and the Head Teacher have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the school upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all young people.

- **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers should look out for potential signs of bullying such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour. Parents and carers should encourage their child not to retaliate and support and encourage them to report the bullying. Parents and carers can report an incident of bullying to the school either in person, or by phoning or emailing the school office or a member of staff. A Leaflet for parents is available in school and on our website: *Bullying – A Parent’s Guide*

- **Pupils**

Pupils should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for signs of bullying among their peers. They should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying, but should offer support to the victim and, if possible, help them to tell a trusted adult.

How we respond to and address bullying issues

When an incident has been reported; action will always be taken. The following guidance sets out our approach.

- Attach no blame for the bullying, even by implication, to the pupil who has been bullied. Involve the pupil who has been bullied in considering what strategies might work, and give them a voice in decisions that are made about them
- Enable the pupil who has been bullied to see that it is achievable for things to be better
- Take care not to overreact, especially to rumours that may be unfounded
- Inform parents/ carers about bullying incidents at an early stage and continue to support and inform them if bullying continues
- Inform relevant staff about actions taken and keep them up to date with progress
- Keep a record of incidents and action taken, and complete any appropriate form (e.g. the reporting of prejudiced incidents) – record on pastoral notes on SEEMiS
- Involve other agencies where appropriate
- Monitor the results of any actions after dealing with incidents
- The person who has been bullying may need support too – reasons for bullying are often complex

Children and Young People are sometimes afraid that things may become worse for them if they talk to an adult about bullying. It is particularly important for adults to be aware of this possible fear and to take it into account in what they do to help.

There are many strategies available for dealing with bullying. Each incident of bullying is different, and there is no particular strategy that will work in every case, however, restorative approaches can help to repair relationships

The first decision that has to be made in each instance is to try to identify which strategy or combination of strategies is most likely to work. It is likely that multiple strategies will be needed for those pupils who persistently and seriously bully others.

If the bullying has taken place through the use of ‘[Social media](#)’ then the ‘[Online Safety Policy](#)’ and ‘[Acceptable Use of mobile devices](#)’ policies will be followed (please refer to both policies).

Procedures

Each school year all staff and pupils are involved in anti-bullying activities. This may take the form of Circle Time, workshops, assemblies or art or drama. Bullying is discussed and children are made aware of what bullying is and the forms it may take ie: physical, verbal, exclusion, damage to property. It is made clear to pupils that everyone is responsible for ensuring bullying is not tolerated.

Bullying is discussed throughout the year in circle time as part of the PSE programme, and pupils are made aware of the importance of speaking up about any concerns they may have. All pupils know that there are a number of adults who will listen to their concerns as well as the P7 Buddy group who are on duty each day in the playground. Throughout the year opportunities are sought to raise awareness.

A variety of strategies are in place to combat bullying:

- All concerns treated seriously and a close working relationship between parents and school is maintained throughout
- A robust behaviour management system which has clear procedures for dealing with reports of bullying
- Positive social attitudes promoted at all times
- Children learn about rights and responsibilities
- Pupil Support Assistants supervise at breaks
- Young Sports Leaders are on duty in the playground to promote cooperative play
- P7 Buddies trained in conflict resolution are on duty in the playground
- P1 to P7 have many opportunities to build relationships e.g. Families, Pupil Group playground pals, lunch buddies, paired reading
- Pupil Council bring concerns to meetings
- Suggestions/Concerns boxes in school
- The Community Liaison Officers works with classes as part of our Health Education programme on aspects of personal safety and bullying

Useful links and resources

Childline - www.childline.org.uk - ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19.

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland - www.cypcs.org.uk - This site is for children and young people in Scotland, your parents and the adults who work with you. Here, you can learn about your rights, make your voice heard and find out who can help you live a safe and happy life.

Respectme - www.respectme.org.uk/ - We work with all adults involved in the lives of children and young people to give them the practical skills and confidence to deal with children who are bullied and those who bully others.

See Me - <https://www.seemescotland.org/> - See Me is Scotland's programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. We are funded by the Scottish Government and Comic Relief, and managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation.

Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk - Institutions have power and influence. We will reach more people and have a greater impact by transforming institutions and by embedding an inclusive and accepting culture. We will work with all organisations, including workplaces, schools, healthcare providers, sports clubs and religious institutions, here and abroad, to ensure they offer inclusive, equal and inspiring environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Unicef Rights Respecting Schools - www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/ - The Rights Respecting Schools Award is a Unicef UK programme that aims to put children's rights at the heart of schools in the UK. We work with thousands of schools across the country to embed children's rights in their ethos and culture to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential.

Appendix 1 - PREJUDICE-BASED BULLYING (Respectme)

Children and young people can experience bullying for a variety of reasons; where they live, their sexual orientations, gender, disability, the colour of their skin, what clothes they wear or what team they support. The one thing that these have in common is difference or perceived difference – some children and young people don't see or understand diversity, they still only see difference.

Difference, or perceived difference, can be a catalyst for children and young people being bullied. If you would like to find out more about the different types of prejudice-based bullying listed below, visit our useful links section.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, together with a reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to continue and go undetected.

Body Image

Body image is hugely important to children and young people and bullying because of body image can have a significantly negative impact. For example, a child or young person who is noticeably over or underweight may find that they are particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour.

Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying is mainly directed towards young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) or young people who are questioning their sexuality. However, it can also be directed at young people who do not conform to strict gender 'norms'. For example, a boy who doesn't like football may stand out as being different. Ultimately, any young person can be homophobically bullied and any young person can display homophobic attitudes which should be challenged.

Transgender

Is an umbrella term used to describe someone who does not conform to society's view of being male or female. Children and young people who are experiencing confusion over their gender identity may be the target of transphobia. Transphobia at its most basic is the fear of a transgender person and the hatred, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice that this fear brings. This can result in bullying behaviour towards an individual because they are not seen to be conforming to gender stereotyping and 'norms'. If children and young people are experiencing confusion over their gender identity, they may be reluctant to challenge bullying behaviour that could attract further attention to them.

Looked after children

Children and young people who are looked after and accommodated are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons: It may be due to regular changes in schools or where they are placed, which can make forming friendships difficult; they may have poor relationship skills stemming from attachment difficulties; inappropriate reactions to situations as a result of learned behaviours; a reluctance to make friends; low self-esteem, lack of role models and a heightened sense of privacy.

Race and Ethnicity

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups, including the gypsy/travelling community, often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture. The status of 'minority' in a school, community or organisation can often make a child or young person the focus for those involved in bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they 'deserve' to be treated differently or with less respect.

Religion and Belief

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths, or having no faith, can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may fuel bullying.

Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out as a target for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be.

Sexism and Gender

Gender inequality and stereotyping can leave children and young people, and in particular girls, who do not conform to these norms vulnerable to bullying.

Bullying in the form of derogatory language, online comments and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman if they do not behave in such a way towards others. Personality traits that do not fit in to the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can make children and young people a target for their actual or perceived difference. These terms can be of an explicit gender-based nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards someone.

This behaviour should not be confused with sexually aggressive behaviour, which is potentially a form of criminal harassment and should be treated as such. For this reason, in Scotland we recommend against using the term 'sexual bullying' as a descriptor in policies or in practice – it is an unclear and reductive term. Sexual assault and exploitation are not types of bullying, they are abuse.

Gender-based bullying – if unchallenged can lead to a deepening of attitudes and behaviour towards girls or those who do not conform to gender norms that can escalate to more abusive behaviours. This behaviour can take place face to face, in private and online or sometimes a combination of all of these. What happens or is shared online will directly impact on a person and that should be our focus. In all probability online activity will relate directly to an experience or conversation they have had in person. Successful anti-bullying work focuses on equalities and developing and modelling relationships based on respect and fairness – and this must include gender.

Disablist Bullying

People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision, and may result in a need for additional support to be provided.

Young Carers

The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.

Social and Economic Prejudice

Bullying due to social and economic status can take place in any group no matter how little diversity exists in it. Small differences in perceived class/family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, belongings, clothing, hygiene, etc can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group or class. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent in some locations.