Anti-bullying Policy

Updated 2024

We want everyone to feel safe, secure and able to build positive relationships with their peers and adults. This mission is encompassed by the Blackness vision, values and aims that we are Ready, Respectful and Safe and that Everyone Here Matter.

In February 2023, Education Scotland published a national thematic review of how schools define, record, and monitor bullying. Following on from this we updated our policy and practices to reflect this.

The monitoring and logging of bullying is only one part of building positive relationships, and we invite pupils, parents / carers, and staff to engage with our building positive relationships policy which further promotes a supportive environment of mutual respect.

The policy context for this policy includes:

- 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (national guidance)
- Equalities legislation, regulations, and guidance
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Definitions

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, in Scotland it can be described as the following:

'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. (Respect for All update, 2024)

This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

Behaviour can include:

- being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online
- being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- having belongings taken or damaged

• being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online)

• sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone

• behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online)

• being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online).

Although a single episode can sometimes be bullying behaviour, we are careful not to confuse bullying behaviour with incidents sparked by a sudden disagreement between pupils, for example, a playground dispute in the 'heat of the moment'. We take all incidents seriously and sensitively and seek to resolve issues regardless of whether they are recorded as bullying behaviour or are treated as an episode of peer turbulence. It is recognised that parents can be very distressed by the thought that their child could have been involved in bullying behaviour.

Prejudice-Based Bullying

It is a Scottish Government expectation that we record and monitor instances when bullying behaviour is aimed at specific groups with protected characteristics as per the Equality Act 2010 named below:

- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Disability
- Race
- Religious beliefs
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Marriage or civil partnership

Although these are not all directly relevant in a primary school setting, they are legally protected characteristics (for further explanation of each characteristic see Appendix 1)

Bullying of a Racial Nature

Bullying which amounts to or is alleged to be racial harassment is recorded on the Racist Incident pro-forma within SEEMIS MIS system. The law states that an incident is racist if it is perceived to be racist by the target or a witness to an incident. If, having received such an allegation, a member of staff fails to act, then he or she could be vicariously guilty of racism. Therefore, any Council employee who receives an allegation of a racist incident is duty-bound to ensure that it is appropriately reported, recorded and acted upon.

Bullying related to a protected characteristic need not be directed at someone who has a particular protected characteristic but can also be based on a perception that they do or that they have an association with people that do.

In addition to the protected characteristics there are other aspects of prejudice which should be highlighted:

- Socio-economic circumstances
- Care experienced children and young people
- Young carers
- Body image

The use of inappropriate language around any of these areas must also be challenged to support an inclusive environment and ethos and to prevent bullying behaviour from arising.

Online/Cyber Bullying

Online Bullying should be treated in the same way and as seriously as face to face bullying. The behaviours and impact whether online or in person must be addressed as part of the anti-bullying approach and not as a separate piece of work or policy. It should however be noted that online bullying can follow a child or young person regardless of where they are. This may sometimes lead to the child or young person feeling like there is no escape from the bullying behaviour.

Challenging bullying behaviours

When we see bullying behaviour, it is important that we recognise and challenge it. If these behaviours are unresolved, they are more likely to impact the wellbeing of those involved and reinforce problematic behaviours in the future.

When we discuss bullying, it is important that we do not label young people with fixed terms such as 'bully' or 'victim'. Instead, the focus should be on helping children and young people to change negative behaviour. Young people sometimes need adult help to understand why bullying behaviour takes place, why it is wrong and how they can change it.

Our Approach

Children should be made aware of the behaviours and consequences of bullying behaviour. Not only through explicit anti-bullying lessons but through the day to day positive actions of everyone. Each class has a focus on respect towards each other and how this can limit bullying behaviour.

Blackness Primary School will encourage young people to resolve personal prejudice and conflicts which have resulted in any one of the eight well-being indicators not being achieved by an individual. This will be done with a restorative approach and can be addressed through, for example, mediation, peer mediation, Circle Time, Fix-it folders or group work.

Our positive and nurturing school ethos aims for everyone to be treated with equal value and provide appropriate supervision, support and safety in all parts of the building and school grounds. Staff are role models and will ensure they demonstrate the behaviour and respect expected by all. Every child should also display this and challenge those learners who do not.

Investigating, dealing with, recording and monitoring bullying

All alleged bullying is taken seriously and dealt with in an appropriate and prompt manner and all bullying - reported, observed or suspected - must be investigated promptly (see Appendix 2).

Bullying behaviour is relational and complex so will often require a range of adult response, often including coaching conversations.

In recognition of this complexity, our response to bullying behaviour is bespoke to the situation and individuals involved.

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded (see Appendix 3). The following information will be recorded:

- The children and young people involved, as well as staff or other adults
- Where and when bullying has taken place

- The type of bullying experienced, e.g. name-calling, rumours, threats, etc.
- Any underlying prejudice including details of any protected characteristic(s)
- Consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns
- Actions taken including resolution at an individual or school-wide level.

Advice for Parents/Carers

- Complementing this policy is a parents and carers advice leaflet which is also available on Dundee City Council website.
- Respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service provides online publications to assist parents/carers in dealing with bullying. These are available from www.respectme.org.uk
- If you are unable to access the Internet, the school will help to provide these resources.

Online Resources Available

- Respectme: http://www.respectme.org.uk/
  Dundee City Council Education Department Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidelines:
  http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/department-publications/Education
- Childline: http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre [CEOP]: http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/
- **Dundee Integrated Children's Services**
  https://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/chserv/index.php?pid=3

Appendix 1

PREJUDICE-BASED BULLYING (respect me)

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 do not 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 does not 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 stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who do not conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying. Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can make children and young people a target for their perceived difference. Bullying in the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girl's and boy's behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. This 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 terminology of 'sexual bullying' as a descriptor in policies or in practice.

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. Minor 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 location

Appendix 2

Blackness Primary School

Action Against Bullying - Flowchart

Allegation/Observation of Bullying Behaviour
(or Potential Bullying Behaviour)

Investigate

Complete
Bullying Investigation Form (School)
(initial contact with Parents/Carers if necessary)

Bullying Allegation Substantiated?

YES

Investigator:
- Contact parents/carers of *all* involved to discuss
- Inform relevant adults
- Sanctions / Restorative work
- Record: **Pastoral Note**
- Email **Bullying Investigation Form** to Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Anti-Bullying Coordinator:
- Complete **DCC Bullying Incident Report** and file
- **Log** as **Bullying Incident**
- **File copies in relevant PPRs / eCasefiles**
- Carry out review at appropriate time
- Monitor at appropriate interval, including checking with those involved if they are satisfied with outcome.

NO

Investigator:
- Deal with incident as appropriate e.g. No Further Action, Pupil Behaviour Incident, Referral
- Record in **Pastoral Notes**
- Email **Bullying Investigation Form** to Anti-Bullying Coordinator (HT)

Anti-Bullying Coordinator:
- Complete **DCC Bullying Incident Report** and file
- **File copies in relevant PPRs / eCasefiles**
- Carry out review at appropriate time
- Monitor at appropriate interval, including checking with those involved if they are satisfied with outcome.

When investigation proves bullying, all interventions will be solution focused and may include:

- mediation
- peer mediation building on a shared concern
- personal support and additional support
- restorative approaches
- supervision
- police involvement or engagement
- interventions from partner agencies
- involving, supporting and enabling parents/carers
- consequences linked with the establishment's behaviour policy

Appendix 3
Bullying Incident Report Form

Dundee City Council Education CHANGING FOR THE FUTURE

On completion, a copy of this form must be kept in the PPR of all those involved, with the identity of each child only revealed in their own PPR. A copy which provides full incident details must be kept centrally by the Anti-bullying Coordinator.

Name of Educational Establishment: _____

Reported by	
Reported to	
Incident date	
Incident time	
Incident location	
Addressed by	

Person(s) experiencing

Forename	Surname	Age	Stage

Person(s) displaying

Forename	Surname	Age	Stage

Type/Nature of Incident

☐ **Written**
(e.g. graffiti, notes, letters, writing on jotters, written threats, ridicule through drawings, other)

☐ **Verbal**
(e.g. name-calling, slagging, threatening, sarcasm, discriminatory comments during classes, other)

☐ **Physical**
(e.g. pushing, shoving, fighting, tripping-up, other)

☐ **Cyber**
(e.g. offensive texts/messages posts or Photographs on mobile or social media sites)

☐ **Damage to property**
(e.g. theft of bags, clothes, money; tearing clothes, ripping books, other)

☐ **Isolation**
(e.g. shunned, rejected, left out of activities/groups)

☐ **Incitement**
(e.g. encouraging others to behave in a manner which harasses or victimises, wearing discriminatory insignia such as racist badges, distributing racist literature).

☐ **Other**

Influenced by

Disability		Sexual identity	
Race		Family circumstances	
Age		Religion or belief	
Gender		Economic	
Gender re-assignment		Sex	
Body image		Care circumstances	
Substance misuse		Pregnancy and maternity	
Other		Not known	

Incident Detail

Allegation substantiated? **Yes** ☐ No ☐

Action

Monitor/Review

Reviewer: _____ Due Date:_____ Completed on:_____

Person(s) Experiencing		**Person(s) Displaying**	
Do they feel their concerns were listened to?		Do they feel their concerns were listened to?	
Do they feel satisfied with the outcome?		Do they feel satisfied with the outcome?	
Is the parent/carer satisfied with the outcome?		Is the parent/carer satisfied with the outcome?	

The incident is:

Resolved		Under consideration		Not resolved		Being addressed	

SEEMIS Recording – Pastoral Notes

Date		Recorded by		Recorded where	