

Baldernock Primary School

Anti-Bullying Guidelines

(This document replaces East Dunbartonshire Council's Procedure Manual 3/34: Education Service Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance (2015). It takes into account national guidance Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017). East Dunbartonshire Council wholly subscribes to the Scottish Government's national approach to anti-bullying for Scotland's children and young people.)

'Respect for All has a fundamental role to play in helping us realise our vision for all children and young people. It provides a holistic framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. Respect for All reflects Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and recognises that bullying impacts on wellbeing. In order to thrive and achieve their full potential, children and young people need learning environments which are safe, nurturing, respectful and free from fear, abuse and discrimination'.

Scottish Government (2017) – Respect for All: A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is a key part of the Scottish Government's strategy for making Scotland the best place in the world for children to grow up. By facilitating a shift in public services towards the early years of a child's life, and towards early intervention whenever a family or young person needs help, the legislation encourages preventative measures, rather than crises' responses. Underpinned by the Scottish Government's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC), and the national approach, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the 2014 Act also establishes a new legal framework within which services are to work together in support of children, young people and families.

Education (Scotland) Act 2016 requires strategic planning to consider socio-economic barriers to learning. It includes provisions which extend the rights of children aged 12 and over with capacity under the Additional Support for Learning Act. Children who are able to can use rights on their own behalf to affect decision making about them.

Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 sets ambitious income targets for child poverty reduction for 2030.

Consultation on the child poverty bill identified children's experience of poverty can lead to bullying or feelings of exclusion, as they may have fewer friends and less access to the social activities of their peers.

Rationale

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers of Baldernock Primary School on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments ((2015, updated 2019)

Vision and Values

The Vision and Values of Baldernock Primary School's Guidelines are:

Vision

Working Together: Respecting Others: Pursuing Excellence

Values

- Environment
- Wellbeing
- Resilient
- Inclusive
- Community

Underpinning these values are the UNCRC articles 12 and 29:

- 12 – I have the right to be listened to and taken seriously
- 29 – I have the right to an education

Motto

Ready Respectful Safe

Definitions of Bullying

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 Me, 2015).

Bullying is a combination of behaviours and impacts that can affect someone's ability to feel in control of themselves; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be kept up over time, by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, hitting or hurting or the fear of these.

Bullying also occurs in the virtual world which children and young people access through the Internet, via social networking (eg FaceBook, Twitter and Snapchat), computers and mobile phones. As communication can happen anywhere and at any time, often unsupervised, on-line bullying can be very pervasive and difficult to handle. However, in essence, the behaviour is the same and requires similar prevention methods. *Bullying – A Guide for Parents and Carers*, which includes guidance on on-line bullying, is available from 'respectme' – Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service on their website - www.respectme.org.uk/resources/publications.

Bullying behaviour may be related to prejudice-based attitudes and behaviours which may compound other differences or difficulties in a child or young person's life.

These include:

- homophobic bullying;
- racist bullying;
- disablist bullying;
- body image;
- religion and belief;
- sexism and gender;
- looked after children and young people;
- young carers;
- socio-economic group
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity.

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

Baldernock Primary School is committed to current definitions that take account of the context in which the event took place and the impact on the person who feels harm has been done to them.

It is considered unhelpful to define bullying purely in terms of behaviours alone. Bullying behaviours can include:

- **verbal** - name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening and intimidating by making prejudiced-based remarks;
- **physical** - hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking;
- **material** - taking and damaging belongings;
- **social** - ignoring, excluding, spreading rumours;
- **cyber bullying** - sending abusive messages electronically, eg via text, emails or social networking sites;
- **mental** - making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied; targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be.

This list is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours that could impact negatively on a child's wellbeing.

It is crucial to take into account the impact that bullying behaviour has on a child or young person. Actions can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration. The person who has experienced harm may have experienced just one event. One incident is sufficient to alert adults to take supportive action.

Not every unkind behaviour constitutes bullying. Children and young people are still learning how to get along with others. They will tease each other, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and disagree about what they like and don't like. These are examples of ordinary conflict, perhaps thoughtlessness and possibly insensitive behaviour and should be viewed as a normal part of growing up. However, if

left unchecked, these behaviours can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feeling afraid, uncomfortable or unsafe in their environment. They should be viewed as an opportunity to help children and young people learn about resolving conflict and getting along with others. Parents, teachers and other adults need to model kindness, conflict resolution, inclusion and responsibility.

Signs and Symptoms

Bullying may not always be obvious.

Signs may include:

- Being frightened of walking to and from school
- Change in usual routine
- Begging to be driven to school
- Being unwilling to go to school
- Crying to sleep at night
- Feeling ill in the morning
- Truancy
- Beginning to do less well at school
- Going home with clothes or books torn
- Having possessions go missing
- Asking for money or stealing money
- Continuously losing pocket money
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Becoming withdrawn, lacking in confidence
- Becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- Bullying other children
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above

Prevention of Bullying

Baldernock Primary School will work to create a positive and supportive ethos. A culture that encourages respect, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes positive relationships will make it difficult for bullying behaviour to occur or be tolerated. This may include particular approaches such as:

- school ethos;
- PSE programme;
- communicating awareness;
- reporting bullying behaviour;
- involvement of the Pupil Council through anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies, comment boxes;
- peer support;
- playground supervision;
- clear playground rules;
- positive management of the playground to provide children with a range of inclusive games to play;
- awareness raising for new staff.

Action

When an incident has been raised, the designated member of staff should log the incident on the SEEMIS Bullying & Equalities module as soon as possible. An investigation into the incident should follow and SEEMIS should be updated throughout this process. Once concluded, the incident should be closed off.

Where the allegation is unfounded, recording of the pupil's name alleged to have been displaying bullying behaviour should be entered in the bottom box headed 'other person' within the 'person displaying' section on SEEMIS. This will ensure that the allegation will not show on the pupil's SEEMIS record.

Where an incident is found to be bullying, the designated member of staff should ensure that appropriate supports/interventions are in place to address any underlying prejudice. It is important to ensure that notes taken during the investigation or discussions with children and young people, parents and carers are recorded on SEEMIS pastoral notes to provide a chronology of events and actions taken, as soon after the event as possible.

The member of staff to whom the incident is first reported, or who has witnessed the incident, should take the incident seriously. They must use their professional judgement in deciding upon appropriate action based on the impact of the bullying behaviour on the child or young person and inform HT/SMT, with the child's knowledge.

The child or young person who has **experienced bullying behaviour** will receive appropriate support and protection.

When trying to assess the nature of an incident and type of response required, the following factors should be taken into account:

- Has the pupil who is experiencing the distress been subjected to repeated incidents of unacceptable behaviour?
- Is there evidence the behaviour is planned or premeditated?
- How does the pupil seem to perceive him/herself in relation to those allegedly involved?
- How distressed is the pupil and what effect is the situation having on his/her self esteem, feelings about school, motivation, relationships with peers, physical well being etc?
- Which pupils are involved in the alleged incident?
- What seems to have triggered the start of the difficulty?
- Are there any witnesses?
- Is there a background to the alleged incident(s)?
- When was the alleged incident(s)?
- When was the alleged incident first reported? Who reported it and to whom?
- How do the others involved in the alleged incident perceive it?
- What explanations are given for the alleged difficulty?
- What is required to try to resolve the difficulty and in the future?

Examples of good practice include:

- the child or young person is taken to a comfortable place with no distractions;
- the child or young person is listened to;
- the member of staff should confirm that bullying is never acceptable; they deserve

- to feel safe;
- they should be gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken;
- they should be asked what they want to see happen next;
- the child or young person should be kept up to date with progress;
- details of the bullying behaviour and actions taken is recorded in the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module;
- the member of staff should inform parents of the incident and action taken, if it is judged to be appropriate.

In relation to the final bullet point, an example where it may not be appropriate to inform parents could include a transgender young person. The young person may not have told their family about their gender identity and inadvertent disclosure could cause needless stress for them or put them at risk. Confidentiality and privacy should be respected and disclosing information to parents or carers should only be done with consent of the young person. Further guidance can be accessed in the following link:

<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/media/1344/supporting-transgender-young-people.pdf>

When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the management team should, based on their professional judgement, endeavour to manage the resolution of the bullying incident within the school. Parents should be involved when their active support is needed to implement a resolution of the bullying incident.

Examples of good practice include:

- appropriate measures put in place to support all those involved;
- any disciplinary measures used will be in line with the school's discipline policy;
- parents of the pupils involved should be informed of the incident and the action taken by the school;
- if a pupil has been physically or sexually assaulted by a peer, the perpetrator may be excluded. The school will follow the procedures highlighted in the authority's "Child Protection Procedure and Guidance" manual;
- if the allegation involves extreme, serious behaviours such as physical or sexual assault, theft or extortion, the parent and the pupil should be informed of their right to report this to the police. Although school staff may feel concerned at highlighting these rights to the parents and pupils, it should be borne in mind that assault, theft and extortion are criminal acts;
- monitoring takes place of those involved and appropriate follow up is agreed.

Consideration should be given to the sanctions and support given to the young person displaying bullying behaviour to ensure that interventions are intended to improve behaviour.

Such approaches might include:

- positive behaviour strategies with an appropriate member of staff, as agreed;
- restorative approaches;
- solution orientated approaches;
- involvement of educational psychologists.

However, 'where it is considered that in all circumstances to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline or the educational wellbeing of the pupils there' (national guidance on the prevention and management of exclusions, Included, Engaged and Involved-Part 2 (June 2017) senior managers have the power to exclude as a last resort.

Communicating Awareness at Baldernock Primary School

In order to tackle the issue of bullying it is essential that **everyone within the community** is aware that **bullying is never acceptable** and what action should be taken if they are subject to, or witness, what might be a bullying incident.

We will:

- **listen** to children's concerns, both in the classroom and in the playground;
- **observe** pupils' behaviour thoughtfully;
- **pre-empt** and intervene in any potential conflict situation;
- **report** alleged incidents as indicated
- **establish** a role for Pupil Council in supporting positive behaviour in consultation with pupils, parents and staff
- **regularly review**, update and publish the school anti-bullying policy and our promoting positive behaviour policy on our website.
- **ensure** every room in the school permanently displays at least one anti-bullying poster
- **display** relevant information on a dedicated notice board, in a prominent position, close to the main entrance to the school
- **regularly** alleged communicate with parents to keep them abreast of our work.

To help raise awareness the Pupil Council/anti-bullying committee will:

- display anti-bullying posters in each classroom;
- speak to the whole school at assemblies;
- contact outside agencies to speak to pupils and parents especially re cyber bullying.

It is essential that everyone takes responsibility in creating a safe and supportive environment within Baldernock Primary School and we aim to achieve this by:

- supporting anti-bullying projects and nurturing a positive ethos of respect for all;
- work on personal safety and bullying as part of the PSE curriculum;

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

If you are being bullied or witness someone else being bullied it is very important that you take action: ignoring it can often mean it will get worse!

Steps you can take include

- tell your teacher or any other member of staff;

- tell a friend who can help tell a teacher;
- tell your parents who can contact the school.

What will we do when you tell us?

Bullying and harassment are wrong and we will always listen to any concerns or comments, but that doesn't mean the people who do it are 'bad' people. It doesn't excuse the bullying behaviour, but it does mean that it is possible to help them change the way they behave.

Steps we will take will include:

- maintaining confidence where appropriate;
- discussing incidents with pupil(s) experiencing the bullying behaviour;
- discussing incidents with pupil(s) displaying bullying behaviour;
- taking appropriate action.

In order to achieve an effective solution to a problem, interventions will range from person centred approaches e.g. counselling, anger management, assertiveness training, which do not use sanctions or punishments, to those which do. Punishment will be in accordance with school's discipline policy.

Review of Guidelines

Anti-Bullying Guidelines will be reviewed during session 2023-2024