

Bishopbriggs Academy



Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy last updated: November 2022

Rationale

This Anti-Bullying policy provides guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers on avoiding, responding to and decreasing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy, alongside the guidelines given by Respect Me: Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service. To advise this policy, the Scottish Government's guidelines, Police Scotland's guidelines and LGBT Youth Scotland's policy were consulted, as were a number of pupils across different year groups within Bishopbriggs Academy as part of a wider review of Promoting Positive Relationships.

Aims

The aim of this policy is:

- Define Bullying, so that it is more easily identifiable for all stakeholders
- Ensure all children and young people are provided with a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which to learn
- Ensure all members of the Bishopbriggs Academy community recognise that bullying behaviours are not acceptable in any form
- To support the accurate recording of incidents of bullying in order to facilitate an appropriate response and follow up

Defining Bullying

The following definition is in line with EDC and the Scottish Government's understanding of what constitutes 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 does not need to involve behaviour that is persistent or repeated. The impact an incident has on a student is most important. The impact a single incident has will often persist for a considerable period of time and this is enough to constitute bullying. One incident is sufficient to alert staff to take supportive action.

Over time, research and the experience of schools have led to an emerging understanding of bullying as a behaviour which emerges from complex social dynamics rather than solely as a characteristic of the individual. It is therefore not helpful to label students as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Such labels can isolate students and prevent a change in behaviour.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening and intimidating by making prejudiced-based remarks;
- Hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking;
- Taking and damaging belongings;
- Ignoring, excluding, spreading rumours;
- Sending abusive messages electronically, e.g. via text emails or social networking sites;
- 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.

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.

The same social dynamics that result in bullying behaviour can often lead to the targeting of individuals due to particular characteristics. This is considered as prejudicial bullying as per the 'protected characteristics' outlined in the Equality Act (2010).

Prevention of Bullying

Bishopbriggs Academy works hard to create a positive and supportive ethos. A culture that encourages respect, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes positive relationships making it difficult for bullying behaviour to occur or be tolerated.

The school promotes an ethos which allows pupils to achieve their potential in a safe and happy environment. We can support pupils using a variety of strategies including;

- Buddying and mentoring systems
- Universal and Targeted pupil support systems
- Senior pupil trained in Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and deliver lessons to BGE pupils through the PSE curriculum
- We use the PSE curriculum to address and inform pupils of bullying type behaviours, including presentations by outside agencies and undertaking specific units of work on anti-bullying
- Skills and knowledge acquired through the completion of the LGBT Scotland Silver Award
- Awareness raising events throughout anti-bullying week, including our S1T-shirt competition
- Peer mediation
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- System which identifies vulnerable pupils and takes steps to remedy this
- Creative and motivational ways to engage pupils and raise awareness of bullying with theatre groups, speakers, film footage and music
- Involvement of the Pupil Council
- Anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies
- An understanding of the impact and legal consequences of on-line bullying, supported by campus police, for the whole school community through the curriculum, assemblies and events for parents and carers

Response to Bullying

The issue of bullying is one that concerns all members of the school community. Staff, students and parents and carers should all be familiar with the following expectations and responsibilities regarding responding to bullying and should consider their response within the context the Scottish Government (2017) – Respect for all: A National Approach to Anti-Bullying and East Dunbartonshire Council’s Anti-Bullying guidance. They should consider and be mindful of what is in the student’s best interest, listening to their views and adopting an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach.

Everyone

- Be compassion and show respect to **all** members of the school community and the surrounding environment.
- Treat others how you would like to be treated.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to prevent bullying behaviour.
- Follow the specific guidance detailed below.

Students

- Do not ignore bullying; make the effort to report bullying behaviour and help to stop it.
- Report incidents to an appropriate adult. This could include: Guidance Teachers, Year Heads, House Tutors, Class Teachers and/or parents and carers.
- Support and encourage others to act appropriately in response to bullying to further develop resilience.
- Do not judge or isolate any parties involved in bullying. Show understanding and compassion for their situation.
- Remember you have the right to pursue your ambitions in an environment where you feel safe, valued and respected.

Staff

- Be aware of East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (2015, updated 2019).
- Be mindful of your role as duty-bearers, enabling students to access their rights.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in the school environment.
- If a student reports an incident of bullying to a member of staff, or staff member witnesses the incident, they should take the incident seriously. The staff member should listen and take notes of the points made.
- Refer to relevant Guidance teacher via SEEMIS
- Guidance teachers will work with students involved and their families to achieve restoration and prevent further related incidents. See *Appendix 1 - Examples of Good Practice*
- All incidents of bullying, and the subsequent actions taken, will be logged by Guidance teacher the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Application.

Parents/Carers

- Listen to your child's concerns. Keep an open mind and try to establish the facts of the situation as far as possible.
- Contact your child's Guidance teacher.
- Work with staff to support your child. This may include reinforcing relevant messages e.g. importance of respect within school community or opportunities to increase resilience.
- Also, be vigilant regarding your child's use of social media. If you have concerns that your child may be experiencing cyber-bullying speak to them about it and contact your child's Guidance teacher if you feel that support from school would help address your concerns.

Appendix 1 - Examples of Good Practice

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

Examples of good practice include:

- The pupil is taken to a comfortable place with no distractions
- the pupil is listened to
- Staff member will speak with them, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken
- Incident recorded on the school system
- Situation monitored and reviewed if required.

When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the establishment's 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:

- The pupil is listened to
- The pupil views are sought
- Avoid labelling, instead address the behaviour
Provide appropriate interventions to prevent further incidences of bullying behaviour

Such approaches might include:

- Small group support or individual support for promoting positive behaviour
- Restorative approaches;
- Solution orientated approaches;
- Involvement of campus police.

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.

Appendix 2 – External links

Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments in East Dunbartonshire –

Available on the school website

Respect Me, Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service –

<https://respectme.org.uk/>

Included, engaged and involved part 2 -

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/included-engaged-involved-part-2-positive-approach-preventing-managing-school/>

Respect for ALL: National approach to anti-bullying –

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/respect-national-approach-anti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/>

The Equality Act (2010) -

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (A Summary)-

https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf

LGBT Youth Scotland-

<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/resources/>