

Argyll and Bute Council Community Services: Education



Anti-Bullying Policy

November 2009

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Policy Statement

All educational establishments within Community Services and its partnership providers are considered learning communities in which everyone should feel welcome and safe. These establishments have a duty to promote an ethos of equality, fairness and mutual respect where all members of its community (managers, teachers, support staff, pupils, parents/carers and partner agencies) have a responsibility to actively prevent any occurrence of bullying behaviours and to challenge all instances of bullying behaviours if and when they do occur.

Bullying behaviours of any type by any person are completely unacceptable. Every young person and adult has the right to work in a caring, supportive and happy environment.

This policy aims to support educational establishments to:

- put in place strategies to prevent bullying happening
- stop any bullying as quickly as possible
- provide appropriate support and intervention to all those involved.

2. Definition of bullying

Bullying can be described as the wilful and conscious desire to systematically hurt, harm or cause distress by one person or persons to another person or persons.

Bullying can take a number of forms, such as:

Verbal	name calling, making fun of someone, threatening/intimidating/racist/homophobic/sexist remarks
Physical	Pushing, tripping, hitting, fighting, intimidating
Social	leaving someone out, spreading rumours, writing nasty notes
Material	willfully damaging another person's property, taking another's property
Cyber	misusing mobile phones or computers, nasty texts, silent phone calls, nasty comments on web pages, hate sites, happy slapping, nasty instant messages, vandalising photos. There are specific criminal offences related to acts of cyber-bullying in some instances. (For further information on cyber-bullying please see appendix 1).

Community Services will not tolerate any form of bullying behaviours occurring in its educational establishments and is committed to eliminating them.

Where an instance of bullying has occurred, the subsequent intervention should concentrate on modifying the bullying behaviour in order that it does not reoccur. Therefore it is best to avoid using the terms 'bully' and 'victim' as they may result in labelling which may result in a longer term stigma on the persons concerned and therefore undermine efforts to modify behaviours. Rather, reference should be made to "bullying behaviour" and "bullied child or person."

3. Expectations

- 3.1 Every educational establishment will have an anti-bullying policy which will outline that establishment's attitude to bullying and its procedures for tackling bullying.
- 3.2 Each educational establishment will implement, monitor and review their establishment anti-bullying policy on dealing with bullying in line with the authority's policy. They will consult with staff, pupils, parents and other users in the preparation, further development, monitoring and review of their policy.

Copies of the policy should be made available to parents and all users of the policy and the content should be communicated via:

- the establishment's Handbooks
- public and parents' meetings
- special anti-bullying initiatives eg national anti-bullying week held annually
- the establishment's website
- notice boards.

- 3.3 Establishments will ensure that staff, pupils, parents/carers are conversant with the requirements of their anti-bullying policy and that its terms and implications are discussed on a regular basis via various means, for example:

- the curriculum (not just PSHE programmes) can be used to promote understanding, encourage openness and foster a sense of shared responsibility
- the establishment's website
- assemblies
- circle time
- leaflets, posters – these could highlight national websites* eg anti-bullying network, respect me, childline, parentline, kidscape,
- induction programmes
- workshops for families
- In-service for staff.

* for list of useful website addresses see appendix 2

4. Prevention of bullying

- 4.1 Heads of establishments must ensure that the safety of pupils, staff and any other stakeholders is paramount.
- 4.2 Heads of establishments will ensure that members of staff are positive role models at all times to encourage positive behaviours and communicate a message of respect.
- 4.3 Heads of establishments will ensure that their anti-bullying policy fits with other relevant policies which promote equality and fairness.
- 4.4 Heads of establishments will include in its policy arrangements for the delivery of in-service training to members of staff to allow them to:
 - have an awareness of the policy
 - understand their role in preventing bullying
 - be confident in dealing with instances of bullying.
- 4.5 Heads of establishments will plan pro-active strategies to prevent bullying such as those listed in 3.3 and others. These could include:
 - anti-bullying weeks/days
 - assemblies
 - peer support
 - playground buddies.

5. Action

- 5.1 Heads of establishments will ensure that those who have been bullied receive appropriate support and protection from further abuse.

Examples of good practice include:

- counselling
- mediation/restorative practice
- peer support
- playground buddies
- circle time
- involvement of specialist agencies.

- 5.2 Heads of establishments will ensure that parents or carers are informed if their child has been involved in bullying and will actively seek their support in implementing a resolution to the bullying incident.
- 5.3 Heads of establishments will help those who engage in bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour and support them to change it. The examples listed in 5.1 are

relevant for the person engaged in bullying behaviour as well as appropriate sanctions which may include exclusion in very serious cases.

6. Recording and Monitoring

- 6.1 Incidents of bullying must be recorded systematically within education establishments and relevant procedures must be followed – these can be found on EOLAS under Management and Development.
- 6.2 Records must be kept up-to-date within educational establishments using the bullying incidents recording form (see appendix 3) and copied to the appropriate Head of Service at the end of December and June each session.
- 6.3 All reported incidents will be taken seriously, investigated and appropriate action taken. It should be noted that this can have an adverse effect if young people do not tell an adult because they think it will get blown out of proportion and make matters worse. It is important to stress that members of staff are approachable and pupils can trust them. The message conveyed should be “Anyone with a concern about bullying will be listened to and their concern will be taken seriously.”
- 6.4 The above guidance is provided in the knowledge that heads of establishments have in place an effective policy on anti-bullying and appropriate strategies for implementing their policy.

7. Management and Coordination

- 7.1 All establishments will identify a senior member of staff whose responsibility it will be to oversee the policy and its implementation, responses to and recording of, incidents and the development of a positive ethos.
- 7.2 Establishments will involve staff, pupils and parents/carers when developing and evaluating the effectiveness of their establishment’s anti-bullying policy. For an example of a Pupil Survey see appendix 4.

8. Policy Development

Thanks to the following whose inputs were invaluable in the development of this policy:

Lynn Kidd, Head Teacher, Inveraray Primary School
Morag McGinlay, PT Pupil Support, Hermitage Academy
May Taylor, Depute Head Teacher, Tarbert Academy
Catherine Dobbie, Education Support Officer – Health and Equalities
Respectme, Scotland’s anti -bullying service
FAB (friends against bullying) pupils at Hermitage Academy
Pupil council at Cardross Primary School.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy is in accordance with Argyll and Bute Council's Equalities and Diversity Scheme. It supports the Council in its duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between diverse groups.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed during session 2012-13.

Appendix 1

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of email, text messages, chat rooms, pagers, or other forms of information technology to deliberately harass, threaten, or intimidate someone. This problem is compounded by the fact that the person exhibiting this behaviour can hide behind an electronic veil, disguising his or her true identity. This makes it difficult to trace the source and can encourage more aggressive behaviour than face to face communications.

Cyberbullying can include such acts as making threats, sending provocative insults or racial, homophobic slurs, attempting to infect the victim's computer with a virus and flooding an email inbox with nonsense messages.

There are many useful resources online (see appendix 2) to support children and young people who experience or exhibit cyberbullying behaviours. A very useful booklet "Cyberbullying... are you switched on?" can be downloaded from www.respectme.org.uk.

Communications Act 2003 s. 127

It is an offence to send by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.

It is an offence if, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message the sender knows to be false.

Appendix 2

Useful websites

www.respectme.org.uk

Scotland's anti-bullying service – has a variety of resources such as printable information sheets, anti-bullying publications (also translated into other languages) and podcasts which require plug ins. Also provides training free of charge to adults.

www.antibullying.net

Good variety of resources including young people's section. Offers training opportunities, conferences and peer support resources

www.childline.org.uk

National charity providing support to children and young people

www.stoptextbully.com

Includes downloadable colourful posters – 10 top tips, research and information, classroom quiz.

www.kidscape.org.uk

Charity supporting children under the age of 16, parents, carers and those working with children to prevent bullying and child abuse – has downloadable leaflets.

www.bullying.co.uk

Good general site. Create your own posters or download one of theirs.

www.bbclic.com

Good for younger children 5-11. Combination of things to do off and online. Some activities suitable for interactive whiteboard, some games, craft activities

www.digizen.org

Has resources to help address the issue of cyberbullying

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Encourages young people to have fun with new technology whilst staying in control of the risks. Resources range from films, presentations, games, lesson plans and posters covering issues of grooming by sexual predators, children's risk taking behaviour online and cyberbullying. The site signposts where a child can go if they have any concerns.

Appendix 3

**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES: EDUCATION**

BULLYING INCIDENT RECORDING FORM

Date

School:	
Pupil Name (victim/s):	Class:
Pupil Name (perpetrator/s):	Class:
Date of Incident:	

Details of Incident

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Action Taken

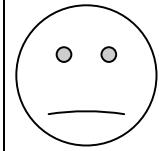
Name of Anti-bullying Coordinator:	
Signature:	Date:

Appendix 4

PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

(Adapted from Research Team, Moray House on Restorative Practices in Schools)

Please put a tick in the box which shows how you feel

				
	Definitely agree	Agree a bit	Disagree	Need more information
This school makes us all feel we belong				
We are expected to work hard in this school				
I have lots of friends in this school				
My teachers like me				
New pupils are helped to settle in here				
I like coming to this school				
Bullying is a big problem here				

				
	Definitely agree	Agree a bit	Disagree	Need more information
Pupils behave well here				
Too many pupils are excluded (suspended) here				
Sometimes teachers have to punish pupils				
Pupils do not miss school without a good reason				
We have people we can go to if we have a problem in school				
Problems get sorted in this school				
My family/carers like me coming to this school				
People where I live think this is a good school				