Lismore Primary School

Equality Policy

Positively Challenging Bullying, Racism and Discrimination

RATIONALE

Our school community acknowledges that bullying, racism and discrimination can and do happen. They are major causes of distress and can lead to serious difficulties in all aspects of life. We are committed to developing positive behaviour and promoting justice and equality for all. We will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour or attitudes and we will always challenge discrimination in any form.

AIM

Our aims are

* to create an ethos of mutual respect and positive relationships so that pupils, staff and parents feel safe, valued, included, supported and respected in our school and successful learning and teaching can thrive.
* To instil in pupils a respect and tolerance for all no matter of gender, race, ability, sexual orientation, disability, religion.

OBJECTIVES

* To promote equal opportunities and good relationships within the school community
* To celebrate diversity, remove barriers to learning and encourage all in the school to achieve their full potential
* To present a consistent and coherent approach to challenging bullying, racism and discrimination
* To support the children in identifying and challenging unacceptable behaviours and attitudes and in choosing positive ones

DEFINITIONS

Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, which is unprovoked, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are: physical (hitting, kicking, theft); verbal (name calling, racist remarks); indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups). Bullying is not simply two children falling out with each other.

Behaviour is bullying behaviour if

* It is repetitive, wilful or persistent
* It is intentionally harmful, carried out by an individual or group, and,
* There is an imbalance of power leaving the person who is bullied feeling defenceless.

More details on the definition of “bullying” can be found in the Argyll and Bute Council Anti Bullying Policy.

Imbalance of power

Imbalance or Abuse of Power can take many forms. It may be quantitative (eg two on one, older on younger), emotional (confident or aggressive over unconfident or passive) or on the basis of physical ability, gender or sexual orientation. It might also manifest in isolating others.

Discrimination

An incident of discrimination or harassment is not the same as an incident of bullying. The closest definition to be used is that applied to racism. This would indicate that a person is being adversely treated or offended on the grounds of their disability, gender, religion or faith or their sexual orientation. Insulting someone as an ‘illegal immigrant’ or ‘gay’ regardless of their actual identity is included in this definition.

Racism

A Racist incident is defined in law as ‘any incident in which someone involved (‘victim’, ‘perpetrator’, ‘witness’ or person to whom the incident was reported) believes there to have been a racial motivation’. This legal definition enables all allegations to be treated seriously from the outset.

All incidents of any of the above must be investigated and then recorded in the same way as bullying incidents. (See Anti Bullying Policy).With children and young people, the investigation will range from a conversation to a full, time-consuming inquiry, depending on the circumstances. If, following the conversation the young person and/or others involved no longer consider the incident to be racist, then no record need be made. If, however, following a conversation or discussion, there is uncertainty in anyone’s mind as to whether or not the incident was of a racist nature, then this should be recorded using the Anti Bullying Policy procedure and record on the incidents form as required by the Council.

CURRICULUM

* Equalities education means learning and teaching about developing positive attitudes and relationships, about discrimination in its different forms, about dealing with and challenging discrimination and about celebrating similarities and differences within our diverse society.
* Equalities education is taught across our curriculum through Circle Times, Health and Wellbeing sessions and Inter-disciplinary learning. Approaches are often informal as questions or situations arise and can be discussed but may also be planned as part of an Interdisciplinary project eg Global Diversity, Scottish Parliament etc. Staff take a proactive approach to reinforcing the message. This means that as well as teaching about attitudes and behaviours in Circle t

Time activities, staff look for opportunities in other curricular areas to explore the issues involved, including stereotyping. For example, in our Titanic project – the attitudes to third class passengers ; slavery in Roman times from Crime and Punishment Week; Syrian Refugees; persecution of people because of their religion; in current affairs discussions. Staff consider opportunities for equalities education in all aspects of the curriculum. Cooperation, conflict resolution and supporting others are emphasised and the children are encouraged to promote inclusion and challenge negative attitudes throughout all aspects of school life.

* Staff respond to incidents involving their pupils, as these arise, and support the children in trying to resolve issues.
* The school has an Anti Bullying Policy which was formulated with the help of the pupils and the agreement of the parents.
* The children have written their own Vision for the school which includes the phrase –We want our school to be friendly and fair and a place where no one feels left out”. The children, parents and staff all sign a contract at the beginning of each school session to say they agree to this. This can be referred to should the need arise.
* The school promotes an inclusive curriculum, which aspires to reflect the diverse nature of our society and address the particular issues of living on an isolated island through activities such as Global Diversity Project, Fairtrade school, focus weeks about different cultures – eg China Week.
* The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for all pupils.

ATTAINMENT

* Pupils’ attainment and progress is monitored across all stages.
* The school values the achievements and progress of pupils from all ethnic groups, from both boys and girls and from children with additional support needs. The school values a wide range of achievements, not just academic success.
* The school ensures participation by all pupils in school events and facilitates pupils to have access to extra-curricular activities. No child is excluded on the grounds of gender, race, ability or religious belief.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

* The school ensures that all pupils are offered the support and guidance they need.
* Our Behaviour Management Policy promotes positive ethos, encourages good behaviour through positive discipline. Children help to formulate the rewards and sanctions system at the beginning of each session and therefore feel they have ownership of it.
* Teaching methods and styles take account of the needs of all pupils.
* All parents are regularly informed of their child’s progress.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

* The school operates a set of procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying, racism and discrimination. Staff, pupils and parents are informed of the procedures and encouraged to report any such incidents to an appropriate member of staff.
* Support is offered to all pupils involved; victims, perpetrators and witnesses, where appropriate.
* The language and learning needs of every pupils are identified and appropriate support is sought and used.
* The school makes full use of partner agencies and outside bodies to support pupils and to provide advice and/or additional educational programmes.

RECORDING AND MONITORING INCIDENTS

* We will always respond to any incident or allegation made by pupils, staff or parents. All incidents are treated seriously and are reported to the HT, who conducts investigations and keeps records.
* Where an incident of bullying, racism or discrimination is found, the HT takes action using the framework of the Anti Bullying Policy.
* Instances of bullying, racism and discrimination are recorded and reported to the council, as required.

RESPONSIBILITIES

By signing the beginning of session contract the children, staff and parents are agreeing that they all have a responsibility to maintain the ethos of the school.

Pupils also have a responsibility to keep the Golden Rules, follow the school’s positive behaviour policy and guidelines and to respect and support each other.

Parents have a responsibility to support their child, to support and respect the dignity of other children and to support the school ethos, rules and discipline procedures.

Staff, including visiting and supply staff, office and janitorial staff, support and teaching staff, share responsibility for promoting the Equalities Policy throughout the school ensuring that it is implemented fairly and consistently and appropriate records are kept both at school and council level.

Staff have the responsibility to ensure that equalities education is integrated into the curriculum and opportunities are provided for all pupils to explore issues of attitudes and behaviours, including developing the skills and confidence to challenge bullying, racism and discrimination.

The HT has responsibility for implementing the policy, liaising with staff, pupils and parents; monitoring and recording incidents and referrals and identifying and arranging follow-up work to be undertaken with children and liaising with staff from other agencies, where appropriate. It also includes purchasing and distributing resources to support learning and teaching and The HT will also advise staff where appropriate and keep abreast of new developments ensuring that staff are well informed.

Full Argyll and Bute Equality Policy available on request.