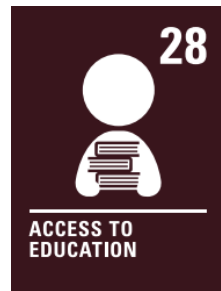




Carrutherstown and Cummertees Partnership

Anti-Bullying Policy

(Updated: November 2024 - Review date: November 2027)



"Dumfries and Galloway Council is committed to our children and young people living free from bullying and harassment and are encouraged to reach their full potential. The joint vision for our children and young people is that all people will be treated with kindness, love and respect, and given the right support at the right time to enable them to reach their full potential."

(D&G Respect for All Anti-Bullying Guidance: 2023)

Here at Carrutherstown and Cummertrees Primary Schools, our values are Diversity, Achievement, Resilience, Empathy and Mindfulness (Cummertrees only). We understand that bullying is never acceptable and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment. We recognise the importance of developing respectful relationships across our school communities and aim to create an environment where everyone feels safe and respected to support attainment and achievement.

Our approaches are informed by Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying, D&G Respect for All Anti-Bullying Guidance, The GIRFEC Framework, UNCRC and The Promise: Scotland's promise that children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected.

Carrutherstown and Cummertrees Schools are committed to challenging all types of prejudice based bullying that relates to perceived or actual differences. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, sex, religion or belief or sexual orientation. These types of bullying will be challenged in the same way as other types of bullying (see further in the policy).

The United Nations Convention of Children's Rights

Bullying is a violation of children's rights and is incompatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, now enacted in Scots law. This promotes and upholds the rights of children and young people and states that all education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. In addition it states the responsibilities of adults to protect and safeguard children and young people from bullying behaviour.



There are forty-two articles within the Convention, but some are significant to this guidance:

- Article 12: You have the right to speak up and have your opinions listened to and taken seriously by adults on things that affect you.
- Article 13: You have the right to say whatever you believe if it does not harm or offend other people. You also have the responsibility to respect the rights and freedoms of others.
- Article 19: Children must be kept safe from harm and protected against violence.
- Article 28: You have the right to an education.
- Article 29: Schools should help children develop their skills and personalities fully, teach them about their own and other people's rights, and prepare them for adult life.

What do we mean by bullying?

In Scotland, bullying is defined as:



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

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face and/or 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
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online)

What can the impact of bullying behaviour be?

A child who is experiencing bullying behaviour may feel:

- Pain or hurt
- Weak and powerless to make things better
- That it might be their fault
- Frightened
- Isolated
- Less confident
- Anxious about making it worse if they tell someone

Is intent required?

Every bullying behaviour incident should be looked at individually. In some cases children may not be aware that their behaviour is bullying. In these circumstances the intent to bully may not be present, but the impact and effect on the person being bullied will be less severe because of this.

It must be explained to the person bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable and why. Intent is difficult to prove, and children can reframe their behaviour when challenged. It is more important to focus on the behaviour and the impact it had, rather than trying to establish whether someone acted deliberately or not.

Does the behaviour have to be persistent?

The issue with persistence is that the behaviour must take place more than once, but the impact of bullying can be felt after a single incident.

Bullying doesn't need to be persistent to influence the mental health and well-being of a child. For those who have been bullied, the fear and anticipation of further bullying behaviour can affect their ability to be themselves and interact with others in a healthy fashion. Bullying behaviour and its potential impacts on children should be addressed as they arise.

It is vital to respond to the behaviour that you see and the impact this is having, rather than relying on a rigid definition. How persistence is viewed by one person - for example daily, weekly, or monthly - may be quite different to how it's viewed by someone else, leading to inequality and inconsistency of practice. It isn't helpful to wait and see if a pattern or repetition emerges before acting.

Online Bullying

For children, online environments are social spaces where they can spend time together and meet friends. Like any other place they visit, there are benefits and risks.

Adults need to be engaged with children about where they go online, just as they are when they go into town or to any other 'real' physical place. But online bullying, or 'cyberbullying' as it is often referred to, shouldn't be treated any differently; it's still about behaviour and impact. The behaviour is the same, but it takes place online, usually on social networking sites and online gaming platforms, and can include a person being called names, threatened, or having rumours spread about them.

We will address online bullying in the same way. Our responses will be more consistent and effective when we address online bullying as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy

When is it not bullying behaviour?

It is important for children to discuss how they feel and help them develop resilience to manage their relationships. We know that children will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of growing up and most children can bounce back from this type of behaviour.

Early intervention and prevention are key elements of an approach focused on ensuring we get it right for all our children and young people. These incidents can be recorded within SEEMiS as a pastoral note.

Labelling

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children 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 need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

www.respectme.org.uk

Spotting the signs

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are experiencing bullying. At Carrutherstown and Cummertrees schools, the staff know our children and their circumstances well and are able to spot subtle signs and changes in behaviour that may indicate that a child is experiencing bullying behaviour.

Adults should be aware of these signs and investigate if they spot any of them. Any of these signs/feelings may have other causes - so quiet, calm discussion and good listening is vital for understanding what is really happening. *(A full list of signs can be found in the D&G Respect Me Anti-Bullying Guidance, 2023)*

Responding to bullying behaviour and why it is important that we do respond.

It's every child's right not to be bullied. Children's rights are unique in that many of them, although designed for the safety and protection of children, must be provided for by adults and the government.

Ways to respond to bullying behaviour in school

Listen

- Children may have chosen to tell you at a less than convenient moment so if you cannot speak to them there and then, it is important to still acknowledge how they are feeling.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by coming to you and arrange a time when you will speak to them about it further.
- Let them know that they have done the best thing by coming to speak to you, that bullying is never acceptable and that they deserve to feel safe in their environment.

Useful questions to ask...

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What do you want to happen?
- What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

For further advice - <https://respectme.org.uk/anti-bullying-practice/ways-to-respond/>

Responding to the child who is displaying bullying behaviour.

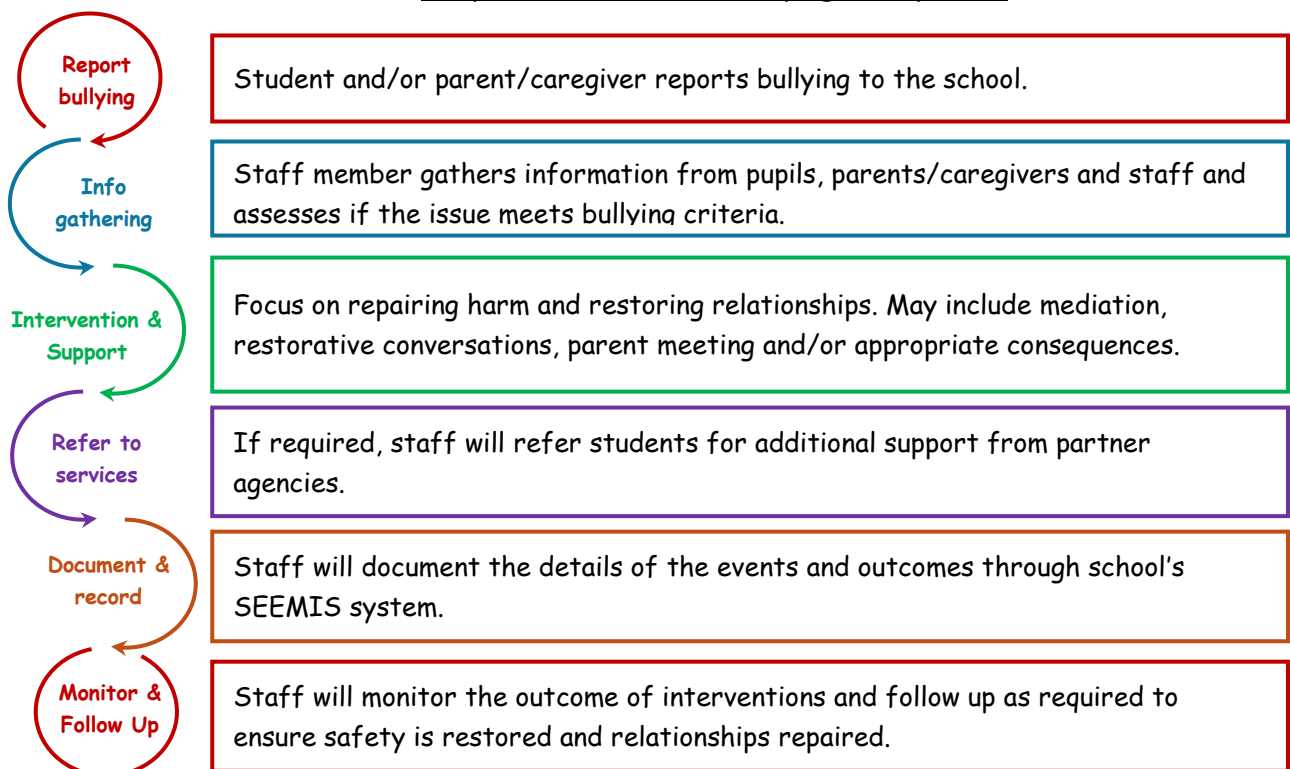
Children who are bullying will need help and support to:

- Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way.
- Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings.
- Repair relationships.
- Deal with the behaviour in the same way as you would with any type of challenging behaviour

- Again, listen to what they have to say. Use your active listening skills and take time to uncover the bigger picture for this person and what shapes them.
- Do not label them a 'bully.' We can help them to change by telling them that their behaviour is bullying, rather than labelling them.
- Clearly outline what their behaviour was, why it was wrong and the natural consequences they face if it continues. This allows you to be clear about the behaviour that needs to change and to state the behaviour that you would like to see instead. It provides clarity, makes it easier to address negative behaviour and, importantly, rewards positive behaviour.
- Be prepared to address prejudiced attitudes that may be behind the behaviour. Bullying behaviour can often be rooted in prejudice due to difference or perceived difference. It's important to address what's happening behind the behaviour, even when they bullying behaviour has stopped.

Source: Respectme

Steps to follow when bullying is reported



Recording bullying behaviour

This section should be read in conjunction with The Scottish Government's Supplementary Guidance on Recording and Monitoring of Bullying Incidents in Schools.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/supplementary-guidance-recording-monitoring-bullying-incidents-schools/>

Recording and monitoring bullying incidents

The member of staff usually managing an incident of bullying behaviour will record all incidents in the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMiS (At Carrutherstown and Cummertrees this will usually be the HT/PT).

The following information is recorded:

- The person experiencing the behaviour.
- The person displaying the behaviour.
- The nature and category of the incident/highlighting the characteristics of the incident.
- The perceived reason(s) for bullying.
- Actions already taken and future actions.
- Conclusion (being addressed, resolved, not resolved, unfounded)

All incidents should be recorded. Records should include whether the incident is bullying, and/or prejudice-based and the nature of this. If there is any dispute or doubt (on the part of any individual) about whether the incident was or was not bullying or prejudice, the incident and the doubts should be recorded.

Incidents of bullying behaviour will be monitored by the headteacher/SLT on a regular basis i.e., more than once a term to analyse that incidents and respond to the presenting themes.

When it is not an incident of bullying behaviour.

Staff may be unsure if behaviour is bullying therefore, they should look at the impact it is having on the child. It can be the case that one child says something unpleasant to another, but this is not always a case of bullying as it has no real impact on the child. Such behaviour should always be challenged, even if it is not bullying. This should then be recorded within the pastoral note for the child or young person and not recorded as a Bullying and Equalities incident.

Approaches to preventing bullying behaviour

Adults should establish open, positive, and supportive relationships where children and young people feel safe, secure, listened to, and secure in their ability to discuss sensitive issues. It is essential that adults within our schools model behaviour which promotes positive relationships and positive behaviours.

Below is a list of approaches that we aim to use to help develop a school culture and ethos where bullying behaviour is not accepted. This list is not exhaustive and further ideas can be found in *D&G Respect Me Anti Bullying Guidance, 2023*.

- Education and awareness of rights e.g., UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools
- Development of an inclusive and positive ethos and climate of respect, responsibility, and positive relationships; and a culture where bullying and discrimination is unacceptable.
- Education exploring prejudice which clearly identifies prejudice based bullying behaviours.
- Pupil involvement and engagement e.g., completing questionnaires to identify problematic times/behaviour/areas, the results could allow for changes to be made.
- Mental, emotional, and social health and wellbeing programmes and activities
- Restorative approaches
- Nurturing approaches and principles
- Acting on patterns of bullying incidents through monitoring
- ChildLine Schools Programme
- Regular anti-bullying campaigns, posters

Involving Parents and carers

Parents and carers are experts in their children, and they can be the key to help resolve bullying behaviour incidents that include their children.

Parents, carers, and families are by far the most important influences on children's lives. Parents who take on a supportive role in their children's learning make a difference in improving achievement and behaviour. Their support can play a vital role at all stages of education. At Carrutherstown and Cummertrees Schools we aim to work in collaboration with parents to address bullying behaviour with the families of both the child/ren experiencing bullying behaviour and the child/ren displaying this behaviour.

Roles and responsibilities

Child Protection Coordinator/Headteacher:

- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy is up to date, implemented, maintained, communicated effectively and regularly reviewed (on 3 year cycle).
- Ensure that bullying incidents are recorded and monitored using the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMIS to identify and respond to emerging trends.
- Enable all staff can access appropriate training/awareness raising of the latest practice in anti-bullying approaches and ensure that anti-bullying policy is included in at least one staff development session per year.
- Engage with children, parents, staff and parent council often about anti-bullying approaches.

Staff and volunteers:

- Must be familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy and contribute to its review and development.
- Understand the school's procedures for recording, managing and monitoring bullying incidents and how to support children who have been bullied or carried out the bullying behaviour.
- Share relevant information with the child's Named Person or other professionals as required to ensure children's safety.
- Include self-evaluation of this aspect of their practice, as part of the wider care and welfare agenda, within their regular review of CPD.

Children and Young People:

- Tell a member of staff if they experience behaviour that makes them feel unsafe or disempowered.
- Accept help and support to resolve any bullying behaviour concerns.
- Be a pro-active school citizen by engaging in activities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Be safe and responsible when connecting with others online and if something worries you or makes you feel uncomfortable tell your parents/carers or a trusted adult in school.
- Be a positive role model for others by showing to others that discrimination of any kind is not okay.

Parents and carers:

- Support and promote their own child's health and wellbeing.
- Encourage and monitor safe and responsible behaviour online.
- Talk to an appropriate member of school staff if their child needs help because of bullying behaviour.
- Be familiar with the school's policy related to anti-bullying guidance, equalities, use of mobile devices or online safety.
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve bullying behaviour concerns and help to contribute towards an ethos of tolerance and non-discrimination that reflects the vision and values of our schools.
- Talk to their child about the importance of valuing people as individuals who make up our diverse society.

Consultation

This policy has been produced in consultation with children and parents (consultation during 2023-2024).

Our parents and carers said that they want the following for their children:

- *'Sense of self-worth'*
- *'Good mental health'*
- *'To have confidence, resilience and respect for others'*
- *'To have an understanding of their individual attributes and achievements'*
- *'To be kind, empathetic and independent'*
- *'To show kindness to others'*

Our children said that they want the following to happen when dealing with bullying in our schools (Nov 2024):

- *'a chance to explain and agree how to move forward'*
- *'when you tell someone, they will help to make it stop'*
- *'adults will listen to me'*
- *'adults will comfort you and help you to be happy'*
- *'help the person showing bullying behaviour to understand how it is wrong'*
- *'consequences for the person showing bullying behaviour'*
- *'talk about what has happened and how it makes people feel'*
- *'ask me if I'm okay'*

Training and development

Carrutherstown and Cummertrees Schools are committed to continuous improvement and staff development. Training opportunities will be identified by the HT/CPC and staff will be supported to complete these. A list of additional training opportunities can be found in D&G Respect Me Anti-Bullying Guidance, 2023 and at <http://respectme.org.uk/training/programmes-and-calendar/>

Review and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years through consultation with children, staff and parents. Updated guidance will be reviewed and this will be included within any review of this policy.

Resources:

Further information & useful resources Websites: A wealth of useful information, advice and practical resources are available online.

www.respectme.org.uk - The Scottish Government's dedicated anti-bullying services provide useful information for professionals, parents and children and young people, including a helpful leaflet entitled 'Cyberbullying: Are you switched on?'

www.ceop.gov.uk - The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

www.thinkuknow.co.uk - A section of Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre dedicated to education, with relevant sections and resources for professionals, parents and children and young people

www.childnet.com - Child net international, a non-profit organisation working to help make the internet a great and safe place for children.

www.kidscape.org.uk - The kidscape website has a section on cyberbullying specifically, containing helpful links and advice for parents and children and young people.

References:

Dumfries and Galloway Council (2018) Preventing and Managing School Exclusion

Dumfries and Galloway Council (2023) Respect for All Anti-Bullying Guidance

Dumfries and Galloway Council (2023) Stages of Intervention in Education and Learning

Education Scotland (2021) Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour in Educational Settings

Education Scotland (2021) Restorative Approaches to Support Positive Relationships and Behaviour

Respect Me - Guidance for Professionals -

<https://www.respectme.org.uk/information-professionals/>

Scottish Government (2013) Better relationships, better learning, better behaviour

Scottish Government (2022) Getting it right for every child Policy Statement

Scottish Government (2024) Respect for All (update 2024): The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People

The Promise Scotland - <https://thepromise.scot/>

UNICEF (2021) RRSA Outcomes at Silver and Gold