



**Neilston Primary School
Anti-Bullying Policy**

What is bullying?

Scotland's vision of anti-bullying for children and young people is as follows:

"Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards."

(Scottish Government, 2010)

Rationale

In working towards this vision we, in Neilston Primary School, will follow the aims set out by the Scottish Government.

"..... all those working or involved with children and young people will aim to:

- Develop positive relationships amongst children, young people and adults which are mutually respectful, responsible and trusting; and promote their emotional health and wellbeing
- Build capacity, resilience and skills in children and young people, and parents and carers, to prevent and deal with bullying
- Prevent bullying of children and young people through a range of policies, strategies and approaches
- Support children, young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying."

Our anti-bullying approaches will be linked with behaviour, equal opportunities, race equality, disability equality, personal, social and health education.

The following policies are also considered in our approaches for prevention and reduction strategies in relation to bullying behaviour:

- United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

(All staff should refer to Revised Circular 8(a) for the authority policy on Bullying and Anti-Bullying.

Further detailed information on these can be found within this policy)

Aims

We are committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all. We aim to:

- Ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied
- Recognise that bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Be aware that only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school
- Work together to promote awareness, understanding and mutual respect amongst pupils and to construct strategies for preventing and responding appropriately to bullying and harassment

Definition of Bullying

Falling in and out of friendships is a normal part of growing up; however, this is distinct from bullying behaviour which is never acceptable. Bullying can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidatory behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can be bullied on the grounds of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion or other real or perceived difference.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- Being called names, being teased, put down or threatened
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings stolen or damaged
- Being ignored, left out, or rumours spread about you
- Receiving threatening or abusive text messages or emails
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are experiencing bullying behaviour
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be

This is not an exhaustive list. There may be other behaviours that can be classed as bullying behaviour either face to face or more recently through the use of technologies.

Something need only happen once for a child or young person to feel worried or scared to go to school.

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 need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

Dealing with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

At Neilston Primary, we adopt a no-blame culture, shared concern and peer-support strategies which have proven to be very effective and are within the policy on promoting positive behaviour. The best strategies address the problems of both bullying and bullied children and involve all those involved and relevant staff in a positive way.

We work together to create an environment where bullying is not tolerated. Particular approaches include:

- Buddying
- Peer mediation
- Circle of Friends
- Pupil Council
- Anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies
- Use of 'worry' boxes

Bullying can often take place in groups. Children have a choice of:

- Watching
- Joining in
- Trying to remain uninvolved
- Trying to help those being bullied
- Walking away from the incident and reporting it to a member of staff

We work with our children to raise awareness of the need not to give the young person showing bullying behavior an audience and that bystanders can actively help the young person experiencing bullying behavior and help prevent bullying behavior. This is done by reporting this type of behavior to

a member of staff, using the worry boxes and encouraging the young person experiencing bullying behavior to report the incident to an adult they can trust.

Mrs Campbell, our Equality Coordinator, has the responsibility for the recording and overseeing of bullying incidents and embedding our policy and practice in the school and wider community. Displays of posters around the school ensure our pupils are aware of this person. We also ensure our parents and carers are aware of who Mrs Campbell is and the role she plays and are encouraged to contact her or another member of the management team with any concerns.

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.

Action will depend on the following factors:

- Age of those involved
- Persistence/repetition of incidents
- Knowledge of individuals
- Level of distress caused
- Context of incident

All reported incidents should be recorded on our incident log and investigated timeously.

(Appendix 1)

The maximum time to carry out a full investigation should be **three** working days. We will record all reported incidents of bullying behaviour, whether they are subsequently confirmed as bullying behaviour or not and the action taken.

If a delay is unavoidable, contact either through letter or phone-call, should be made with the parent/carers of the individual who has made the allegation, stating the matter is under investigation and that the school will be contacting the parent/carers upon completion of the enquiry.

All our pupils will be made aware of the complaints procedure in the school including them knowing who they can share their concerns with in confidence and that these concerns will be acted upon.

If the investigation necessitates action to be taken, the following steps should be followed:

- Explain the incident will be recorded
- Make it clear the type of behaviour exhibited is totally unacceptable
- Work with the person showing bullying behaviour to make them aware of the impact of their actions on others
- Support the person showing bullying behaviour using restorative practices to improve their behaviour and prevent a recurrence
- Involve member of staff, including, if appropriate, staff in other agencies, who work with the young person experiencing bullying behaviour and the person showing bullying behaviour
- Inform parents/carers of the incident and any action taken, seeking to work in partnership
- In extreme cases such as physical attacks or ongoing harassment, a young person showing bullying behaviour may be excluded from the school
- In extreme cases, seek advice from link QIO and consider notifying the Campus Police Officer at EHS

(Appendix 2)

Support for the young person experiencing bullying behaviour is essential immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. This support will normally be provided by the class teacher or member of management with responsibility for the pastoral care of that particular stage.

Procedures

- Class teachers or PSA may be the first point of contact for pupils or parents. PSAs should report any concern to class teacher or member of management team
- Class teachers should complete a Pupil/Staff Information Log (**Appendix 1**). If no further action is required then this log should be kept in the attendance folder.
- Should further investigation be required then the Pupil/Staff Information Log should be sent to a member of the management team for further investigation
- Management will complete an Incident Form (**Appendix 2**) involving the interviewing and recording of the whole incident. At this point parents may need to be informed and any follow up agreed
- Consideration of age, gender, ethnicity and disability should be taken into account by both those displaying bullying behaviour and those experiencing bullying behaviour
- All investigated incidents should be filed in HT's behaviour management chronology file
- Where appropriate significant events may initiate or be added to a chronology
- Confirmed cases of bullying behaviour should be printed on yellow paper
- All incidents of bullying to be collated on the Annual Authority Monitoring Form
- Consideration of discipline and support should be given to those exhibiting bullying behaviour to promote a change in or modifying the unacceptable behaviour
- Support for those experiencing bullying behaviour is essential. This will normally be provided by the member of management with pastoral responsibility for that particular stage
- We must report all confirmed bullying and the number of investigated and unconfirmed incidences of bullying to our Head of Service at the end of each school session. This includes a nil return.

At all times staff should take into account the feelings of the young person experiencing bullying behaviour when exercising judgment. If a child feels that bullying behaviour has taken place, this must be taken seriously. What might seem trivial to an adult can have serious psychological damage to a child.

In Class Strategies

In class strategies could involve:

- Observation of social relationships between pupils
- Keep records of behaviour incidents eg in class diary
- Investigate pupils' views during anti-bullying week and through Health and PSD programmes
- Discuss potential problems with colleagues
- Encourage use of worry boxes located in class and at various points around the school
- Revisit and reinforce Cool in School programmes at all stages to allow strategies to be remembered and adhered to
- Dealing with bullying provides the opportunity to build better relationships. This will only happen if adults think carefully about who owns the information that they have been entrusted with, and if the opinions and suggestions of pupils and parents are valued and acknowledged
- Adopting a solution oriented approach to approaching instances of bullying through conflict resolution. This could be initiated through peer-mediation practices
- Analysis of pupil survey results during anti-bullying week focus to build a school profile and gather accurate information
- We must be wary of only suggesting solutions that are based on our own experiences. Just because we have found things that work for us, this does not necessarily mean that they will work for everyone else.

Mobile, Internet and Wireless Technologies

These have increased the pace of communication and brought benefits to users worldwide. However, their popularity provides increasing opportunities for misuse through 'online bullying'. It is crucial that children and young people, who are particularly skilful at adapting to new technology, use their mobiles and the internet safely.

Guidance is available on safe use of technology in Standard Circular 69 as well as in **Appendix 3**.

Cross Curricular Links

It is our duty to promote the personal safety of all pupils through Health and Wellbeing across the curriculum. Our planned curricular programme from P1-7 should help ensure our pupils have an awareness of bullying behaviour and skills to deal with it. We will continue to audit our programmes to ensure continuity and progression across the stages.

There are many resources to support anti-bullying, including websites. The authority's Curriculinks www.ea.erenfrew.sch.uk/curriculinks has access to many of these websites.

A list of relevant resources and website and further supports can be found on **Appendix 4**.

Training and Staff Development

All members of the school should make themselves aware of the school's policy and can access relevant training which makes clear specific roles and responsibilities as required by the anti-bullying policy. The authority will include training related to anti-bullying on the CPD website.

Parental Involvement

Close links with parents and carers, as set out in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 and in the authority's own Parental Involvement Strategy, are crucial in assisting us to deal with bullying behaviour and harassment. Regular awareness raising should be available for parents/carers. Our Parent Council should play an important role in this. We will work with our Parent Council to prepare an advice leaflet to parents detailing the school's procedures for dealing with bullying incidents and the school's anti-bullying programme. The emphasis will be on parents working with the school to resolve problems.

Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

Our policy will be monitored through annual reports of confirmed incidents and those investigated but found to be unconfirmed.

A formal evaluation of the policy will take place every 3 years in line with authority policy evaluation.