



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 14: Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 19: Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

Article 29: Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others' human rights and their own and other cultures.

Rationale

The school aims to deliver East Renfrewshire Education Department's vision of '*Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*'. It is the responsibility of each school to work towards eliminating all forms of bullying and to provide a safe, supportive environment for all, without fear of experiencing bullying behaviour

Aims

- ✓ To promote an ethos of inclusion and a culture where anti-social behaviour is not tolerated
- ✓ To foster a culture where bullying behaviour is treated as a serious offence and where pupils feel free to report incidents of bullying behaviour
- ✓ To have effective strategies in place to prevent and respond appropriately to bullying behaviour or harassment
- ✓ To ensure that pupils are equipped with the appropriate skills and strategies to deal with bullying behaviour

What is Bullying Behaviour?

Bullying can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidating behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can be on the receiving end of bullying behaviour for a number of reasons including: age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, nationality or religion. Bullying behaviour can include:

- Being called names, being teased, being put down or threatened
- Being hit, tripped or kicked
- Having belongings stolen or damaged
- Being ignored, being left out or having rumours spread about you
- Receiving abusive text messages or e-mails
- Being forced to do things against your will
- Being targeted for who you are or who you are perceived to be

Social Media

The popularity of mobile, internet and wireless technologies have provided increasing opportunities for 'cyberbullying'. In partnership with parents, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of how to use their mobiles and the internet appropriately and safely.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of staff:

- To provide an environment where all children feel safe, welcome and included
- To foster an ethos of inclusion and promote positive attitudes in the classroom
- To actively involve children in promoting positive behaviour
- To discuss and explore the effects of bullying behaviour through the Health and Wellbeing curriculum
- To be vigilant and look out for unusual behavioural trends
- To observe and monitor children who give cause for concern
- To provide support and guidance for those involved in bullying behaviour
- To encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying behaviour against themselves or others
- To engage in restorative approaches to ensure that all children are treated fairly and equally
- To keep abreast of research and national agenda surrounding bullying
- To engage with effective learning and teaching resources, for example, 'Respect Me'

The role of the pupils:

- To encourage one another to create an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated
- To ensure everyone feels valued and respected
- To contribute their thoughts and opinions through the Pupil Council and other pupil groups/committees
- To offer peer support and guidance through buddying or mentoring
- To lead or make use of Peer Mediation to support children when solving their own disputes
- To participate in Anti-Bullying campaigns, posters and assemblies to raise awareness

The role of parents:

- To support the school values of tolerance, care, concern and respect for self and others
- To foster an open pathway of communication between the school and home
- To raise awareness of the importance of encouraging a positive and inclusive ethos within the school and beyond
- To feel supported to contact the school if they have any concerns

Responding to Allegations of Bullying Behaviour

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
- Knowledge of individuals
- Level of distress caused
- Context of the incident

The school will record all allegations of bullying behaviour, with a full investigation carried out. Where the investigation may take longer, a phone call will be made, explaining that the parent/carer will be contacted upon completion of the enquiry.

A 'first offence' of a minor nature, for example, name-calling or abusive language will be challenged and the child will be made aware that the behaviour is unacceptable. The pupil should then be told that any further instances will be recorded.

A member of the Senior Management Team will monitor incidents recorded regularly to ensure patterns of behaviour are recognised and measures are put in place to respond appropriately.

If the investigation confirms bullying behaviour the following steps should be followed:

- ✓ Explain to those involved that the incident will be recorded
- ✓ Make it clear that the type of behaviour exhibited is totally unacceptable
- ✓ Involve appropriate members of staff to work with the young person experiencing bullying behaviour
- ✓ Work with the person exhibiting bullying behaviour to make them aware of the impact of their actions on others, and using restorative practice, support them to improve their behaviour and prevent a recurrence
- ✓ Inform parents/carers of the incident and any action taken, seeking to work in effective partnership
- ✓ In extreme cases such as physical attacks or ongoing harassment, a young person showing bullying behaviour may be excluded from school
- ✓ In extreme cases, advice of the link Quality Improvement Officer may be sought and police notified

Whole School Approaches to Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Our Lady of the Missions addresses issues of relationships through our ethos of tolerance, respect and care of others. This is supported by:

- Access to relevant training to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and that strategies to deal with bullying behaviour are understood.
- Aspects of our Health and Wellbeing curriculum
- Support from external agencies such as Educational Psychologist, Campus Police Officer etc.
- Pupils and staff awareness of their roles and responsibilities
- Participation in the Rights Respecting Schools initiative