

This policy has been written by the school, building on national best practice, East Renfrewshire Council, Education Scotland and Scottish Government policy.



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.

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."
(respectme, 2015)

Bullying is a clear breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC](#). As a Gold Rights Respecting school, we at Our Lady of the Missions are committed to challenging all types of prejudiced based bullying behaviours and language in line with the Equality Act (2010). Some bullying behaviour may be an offence within the law.

Rationale

The school aims to deliver East Renfrewshire Education Department's vision of '[Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences](#)'. At Our Lady of the Missions we are committed to eliminating all forms of bullying and to provide a safe, supportive environment for all, without fear of experiencing bullying behaviour. The policy outlined here reflects a clear commitment to promoting a respectful, equitable and inclusive culture and ethos where bullying is unacceptable and not tolerated.

Our Aims are:

- ✓ To consistently and continuously convey the message that bullying is **not** acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- ✓ To embed an ethos of **anti-bullying** in day-to-day practices
- ✓ To ensure we **Get It Right For Every Child** (GIRFEC) and that all young people in our school are **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included**.
- ✓ To promote positive relationships and behaviours amongst all children and young people and adults around them ([Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy](#))
- ✓ To respect the **rights of children** as paramount [Rights Respecting School Policy](#)
- ✓ To address all aspects of **prejudice** in order to make sure all types of prejudice based bullying are treated with equal importance (including bullying based on the protected characteristics listed in the [Equality Act 2010](#))
- ✓ To promote an ethos which celebrates **diversity**
- ✓ To promote an ethos of **inclusion** where positive behaviour and **respect** for others is promoted
- ✓ To promote a culture where **equality** and **fairness** are at the forefront of interactions between members of the school community
- ✓ To create an **open culture** where children confident in reporting incidents of bullying behaviour and that their views will be given due weight
- ✓ To develop **resilience**, enabling children to use have effective strategies in place to prevent and respond appropriately to bullying behaviour or harassment
- ✓ To ensure that adults and children understand what constitutes bullying behaviour
- ✓ To ensure that children who have been victims of bullying are appropriately **supported** and that their attainment an achievement is not impacted
- ✓ To ensure that children who demonstrate bullying type behaviours are **supported** in order to determine underlying reasons for behaviour and improve outcomes for all
- ✓ To work in partnership to prevent and respond effectively to all forms of bullying, racism, prejudice and discrimination.
- ✓ To ensure parents and pupils are included and consulted on the development of this anti-bullying policy
- ✓ To ensure that anti-bullying policy is evaluated and reviewed with children, parents and staff every three years.
- ✓ To complete an Equalities, Fairness and Rights Impact assessment

What is Bullying Behaviour?

Bullying can be expressed through **physical, emotional, verbal or intimidating behaviour** or in the form of marginalisation. Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally. While the

behaviour may only happen once, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages confrontations, physical interactions, or the fear of these.

People can be on the receiving end of bullying behaviour for a number of reasons including those stated as Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act 2010: **age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation**. Other reasons which for bullying behaviour not covered by the Equality Act 2010 include:

- Disability or additional support need
- Asylum-seekers and refugees
- Body image and physical appearance
- Gender identity and transphobic bullying
- Gypsy/travellers
- Socio-economic status
- Care experienced children and young people
- Sectarianism
- Young carers

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, e-mails or comments online
- Being forced to do things against your will
- Being targeted for who you are or who you are perceived to be

When is it not bullying behaviour?

Children and young people falling out or having disagreements is a normal part of growing up and building relationships. Accidental bumps and knocks, not liking someone or expressing unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others can be painful or discomforting. In Our Lady of the Missions, children will have opportunities to discuss how they feel and to develop resilience and emotional literacy in managing their relationships through the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum. Our whole school "Children on a Mission" positive behaviour policy ensures that we work together to get it right for every child within the school community.

Online bullying

The popularity of mobile, internet and wireless technologies have provided increasing opportunities for 'cyberbullying'. Online bullying must be treated as seriously as face-to-face bullying. In partnership with parents, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of how to act online and to use the internet appropriately and safely. These skills will be taught explicitly through Digital Technology lessons and the Health and Wellbeing

curriculum. These lessons will provide an opportunity for developing digital literacy skills and cyber resilience and safety across curricular areas.

Online bullying can include:

- Text messages which are abusive or threatening.
- Trolling through media, games or social networks.
- Abusive polls
- Setting up hate sites or groups about individuals
- Videos or images being made which are humiliating or embarrassing
- Fake accounts being made
- Identity theft
- Explicit messages being sent or pressurising someone to send
- Engaging in sexual conversations
- Conversations encouraging self-harm
- Purposely excluding others from games, online networks or groups
- Encouraging someone to self-harm

Racism

Racism is when you are treated differently or discriminated against because of your race. This is prejudice-based bullying which can relate to perceived or actual differences which can lead to bullying behaviour and language due to a person's race. The Equality Act 2010 states that you must not be treated differently because of race. Race is a protected characteristic. Race can refer to an individual's colour of skin, nationality, ethnicity, citizenship or ethnic or national origins. Someone may face racism through direct discrimination, indirect racism (e.g. policies or practices which puts a certain race at a disadvantage), harassment or victimisation. (e.g. when treated badly because you have complained about a racist incident. Racism is a distinct experience of discrimination and oppression which is experienced across multiple dimensions of an individual's life.

Racism can include:

- Discriminatory behaviours because someone dresses or communicates differently
- Discriminatory behaviours due to an individual's belief, culture, skin colour or accent.
- Individuals being made to feel that they are inferior because of their ethnicity or culture
- Individuals being excluded, isolated or marginalised because of their skin colour, religious beliefs, nationality or ethnicity.
- Individuals being ridiculed or laughed at because of their race, religion or cultural background
- Microaggressions which may be intentional or unintentional that communicate hostility and negative attitudes towards someone else based on their race.
- Taking or damaging property of someone else e.g. with racist graffiti
- Physical assaults or harassment

- Online racism (e.g. through messages, online games or emails)
- Encouraging others to behave in a racist way
- Wearing racist symbols on clothing
- Not cooperating or working with others because of their race or ethnicity

In Our Lady of the Missions, any incident which is perceived to be racist is recorded and investigated with rigour and transparency. We are committed to preventing racism by:

- Creating an anti-racist, inclusive culture where all pupils are supported and treated fairly and equally regardless of their race or ethnic background.
- Challenging racial stereotypes and prejudice-based views openly and constructively.
- Regular opportunities for staff training to improve knowledge and confident in responding to incidents of a racial nature.
- Opportunities for staff to develop their racial literacy
- Creation of visually inclusive learning environments.
- Ensuring resources represent individuals and communities in an authentic way without reinforcing stereotypes
- Working in partnership with a wide range of parents, carers and partner representatives from a diverse background
- Trying to include diverse role models for pupils
- Use the curriculum to proactively address the challenges of racist language and behaviours.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of staff:

- To provide an environment where all children feel safe, welcome and included
- To celebrate diversity
- To promote an ethos of inclusion, respect, fairness, equality and forgiveness
- To actively involve children in promoting positive behaviour through Children on a Mission: Reaching for the Stars
- Ensure that cyber resilience and internet safety is central to all digital technology (see [Digital learning and teaching policy](#))
- 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 engage with the ERC Anti-Bullying toolkit (see appendices)
- To keep abreast of research and national agenda surrounding bullying
- To engage with effective learning and teaching resources in line with Respect for all (Scot Government <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00527674.pdf>)

The role of the pupils:

- To encourage one another to create an environment where bullying behaviour is **never tolerated**
- To ensure everyone feels **valued, respected** and **included**
- To promote **respect** in relation to the **rights** of others
- To **contribute** their views and through the Pupil Council and other pupil groups/committees
- To offer **peer support** and guidance through buddying, mentoring and peer mediation
- To participate in Anti-Bullying campaigns, posters and assemblies to raise awareness
- To engage in learning within classroom and wider school setting about what bullying is, how it can affect others and how to prevent bullying.

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, whether confirmed or not and conduct a full investigation. 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 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
- ✓ Support any child who has experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviours through appropriate means including wellbeing assessments and wellbeing plan if necessary
- ✓ 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:

- An understanding that children with additional support needs may experience bullying differently and support should be targeted appropriately
- Access to relevant training to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and that strategies to deal with bullying behaviour are understood.
- Ongoing curricular focus on anti-bullying education
- 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
- A whole school positive behaviour policy 'We are children on a mission'

Appendices:

- [East Renfrewshire Standard Circular 8a \(anti-Bullying\)](#)
- [Equality Act \(2010\)](#)
- [Respect For All: National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young people](#)
- [Respect Me \(Scottish Government\)](#) (policy Through to Practice Document)
- [The Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)
- <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>
- [Rights Respecting School Policy](#)
- [Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences](#)
- [Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy\)](#)
- [Digital learning and teaching policy](#)
- [ERC Anti-bullying resource toolkit](#)

