

# Braes High School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

<p><b>Policy developed using advice from Falkirk Council, Respectme and Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People</b></p>	<p>Development and consultation carried out by: Staff Working Group, Campus Cop, Parent Council, Pupil Council</p>	<p>Development and consultation: May 2018-Oct 2018  Launch event: Oct (whole staff in-service day)</p>
<p><b>Training, Evaluation &amp; Review</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>	<p><b>Signed off</b></p>
<p>Whole staff roll out</p>	<p>Oct 2018</p>	

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is designed to apply to all pupils in Braes High School.
- 1.2 Braes High School is committed to the personal and social wellbeing of all pupils. We aim to provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, as a matter of right and as a prerequisite to effective learning and development.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.3 In this context Braes High School, through all staff who work within it, is unequivocally opposed to bullying. We fully recognise the damage which bullying can do to pupil's lives – both those who display bullying behaviours and those who experience bullying behaviours – in the short and long term. We are therefore committed to reducing and preventing bullying and providing appropriate support when bullying does occur. This policy sets clear expectations regarding how these goals will be achieved.
- 1.4 **For the purposes of this policy we define bullying as behaviour, which may or may not be deliberate, by one person or a group, which upsets, hurts, harms or injures another, impacting directly on their quality of life. Bullying may take many forms, including verbal, physical and social behaviour, and increasingly it may involve the use of technology, such as mobile phones or computers to interact using social media. It is likely to be associated with a power difference between those who bully and those who are bullied, to lead to hurt, fear and anxiety, and is often the result of a difference, perceived or real.**
- 1.5 In addressing the issue of bullying we recognise that pupils will naturally fall in and out of friendships in the course of growing up. Such difficulties, disagreements or conflicts might be relatively minor and short-lived, but at other times may lead to serious conflict requiring direct intervention to ensure resolution. At whatever level such conflict occurs it is important to distinguish it from bullying, and to ensure that pupils and their parents and carers understand this distinction. It should also be recognised of course that unresolved conflict might, in time, lead to bullying.
- 1.6 We believe it is important to make a distinction between conflict and bullying as describing all relationship difficulties as 'bullying' is likely to devalue the term and obscure the very real risks which we know are associated with pupils being bullied. It can also create confusion around the nature of response or intervention which is required to get best outcomes for pupils. Bullying is a mixture of behaviours and impacts, and adult intervention should be guided by the impact on a pupil.
- 1.7 This policy has been developed to reflect the needs of the pupils and families within our community. The approach taken by staff when addressing instances of bullying should at all times take account of the pupil's past experiences, any additional support needs and the behaviours exhibited by those experiencing bullying behaviour, or those displaying bullying behaviour. The GIRFEC wellbeing indicators should be considered when planning the support provided for pupils who experience instances of bullying or pupils who exhibit bullying behaviours.

---

<sup>1</sup> Article 6 "I should be supported to live and grow"

- 1.8 Braes High School acknowledges the harm and distress caused to pupils and families by bullying behaviours. Bullying behaviour carried out on-line, through text, social-media and e-mail is a more recent development. On-line bullying behaviour is often similar in nature to the traditional view of bullying but has a far greater reach due to our interconnected technological society. The training of staff within the school includes best practice advice on tackling on-line bullying behaviours.
- 1.9 Anti-bullying is covered within the health and wellbeing curriculum.
- 1.10 Braes High School is fully committed to equality and diversity and to ensuring that we are fully inclusive. In the context of this policy we fully recognise the need and responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of pupils who may be vulnerable to bullying as a result of a real or perceived difference affecting them or any member of their family. Through policy and practice we will develop the capacity to respond to any form of prejudice based bullying, recognising the importance of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010:
- age;
  - disability;
  - gender reassignment;
  - marriage and civil partnership;
  - pregnancy and maternity;
  - race;
  - religion or belief;
  - sex;
  - sexual orientation.

Although only 7 of these characteristics may apply in schools; age, marriage and civil partnerships are also considered to be relevant as pupils may be subject to bullying as a result of these characteristics applying to their parents, carers, or other family members. This strategic policy also recognises the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people (LGBTI) as a protected characteristic group. There is an established equalities pupil group which meets within the school.

Further details of prejudice based bullying are included in Appendix 1, reproduced here with the kind permission of Respectme ([respectme.org.uk](http://respectme.org.uk)).<sup>2</sup>

We also recognise the potential vulnerability of pupils in relation to the following:

- Asylum seeker or refugee status
- Body Image
- Looked after status
- Social or economic status
- Young carer responsibilities
- Imprisonment of parents, siblings, or other family members

---

<sup>2</sup> Article 2 “All children have these rights”

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 In 1998 the Human Rights Act (1998) made it a requirement that public authorities take steps to prevent bullying. Also since that time there have been major developments relating to social inclusion and an understanding of the factors which impact on educational attainment and achievement. This has implied a need, amongst other things, to look more closely at all obstacles to learning.
- 2.2 This policy sits within the policy framework for Promoting Positive Relationship in Falkirk produced by Falkirk Council Education and Children’s Services and reflects the main principles and features of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People (2017), Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014), Education (Scotland) Act 2016, Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Human Rights Act (1998), Equality Act (2014), Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014). This policy recognises that bullying can be a child protection issue and therefore complements and reflects both the operational and the legal requirements of Falkirk Council’s Child Protection Strategy.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.3 Braes High is a Rights Respecting School (RRS). This means it is a place that promotes the values of respect, dignity and non-discrimination. Together as a school community, we are learning about children’s rights, referring to the 42 Articles (rights) detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

### Article 1 “Everyone under 18 has these rights”

The Braes High community is putting them into practice every day with the four key principles as the foundation of our RRS School Charter: wellbeing, participation, relationships and self-esteem. We continue to build the capacity of our young people as rights-holders to claim their rights, and the capacity of adults as duty bearers to fulfil their obligation.

Child Rights Education helps adults, children and young people to work together, providing the space and encouragement for the meaningful participation and sustained civic engagement of children and young people.

### Article 42 “All adults and children should know about this convention”



---

<sup>3</sup> Article 4 “The Government should make sure my rights are respected”

### 3.0 Policy Statement

#### 3.1 Braes High School aims to:

- Reduce, prevent and respond effectively to bullying;
- Improve behaviour through an effective strategy which actively involves pupils, parents/carers and staff in positive approaches;
- Ensure, through training and participation, that the BHS key concept of **respect for all** is understood and implemented by all those involved;
- Ensure that there are effective methods for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of this policy, including any effects on minority or protected characteristic groups.

### 4.0 Policy in Practice<sup>4</sup>

To ensure the effective implementation of this policy there will be action at two levels:

- Braes High School as an establishment
- Individual staff within the school

#### 4.1 Braes High School as an establishment will ensure that:

- The Pastoral Team will be responsible for ensuring that the school's anti-bullying policy is up-to-date and ensure that anti-bullying training is undertaken by school staff;
- The anti-bullying policy is implemented and communicated effectively;
- Extracurricular clubs associated with the school implement this policy and the lead member of staff ensures the effective exchange of relevant information to the Named Person;
- The Pastoral Team will be responsible for coordinating the anti-bullying policy and for monitoring its implementation and impact;
- The policy articulates with the curriculum through the school's Personal and Social Education/Health & Wellbeing programme;
- Regular review of the policy (3yr review cycle) is the result of genuine partnership between staff, pupils and parents. Critically this process will include the consideration of pupil and parent feedback, both planned and unsolicited and in consultation with the wider community and partners;
- Bullying incidents are recorded and monitored, where appropriate, using On The Button referrals and pastoral notes;
- Appropriate training/awareness raising of the latest practice in anti-bullying approach will be made available to staff, pupils, parents and carers.
- On an annual basis, at least one professional development session will be allocated to anti-bullying policy and practice.
- Dining Hall is supervised at interval and lunchtime by a member of SMT and staff volunteers.
- Safe spaces are provided for groups of pupils in the form of: Best of You Base and Lunchtime Clubs.
- Where appropriate, pupils may be referred into a programme of supported inclusion as an alternative to temporary external exclusion.

---

<sup>4</sup> Article 3 "Adults must do what is best for me"

4.2 Braes High School staff will ensure that they:

- Are fully conversant with the BHS 'Anti-bullying Policy';
- Engage with pupils in a supportive, calm, restorative and respectful manner in order to model appropriate learning behaviour
- Fully understand and follow procedures for recording, managing and monitoring inappropriate learning behaviours including bullying incidents, and supporting and managing pupils who have bullied or been bullied;
- Share relevant information concerning individual pupils and incidents of bullying with the pupil's Named Person (Pastoral Head/Pupil Support Key Teacher) or other professionals as required, to ensure pupil's safety at all times;
- Include self-evaluation of this aspect of their practice, as part of the wider care and welfare agenda, within their regular review of continuing professional development.

## **5.0 Recording Bullying Incidents<sup>5</sup>**

5.1 All staff are required where appropriate to record incidents of bullying behaviour by referring the situation to the relevant Named Person (Pastoral Head/Pupil Support Key Teacher) via an OTB referral.

5.2 **Incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded only by the Named Person using the Pastoral Notes within the school's OTB system.**

5.3 Appropriate training regarding the recording of bullying incidents will be provided to the school's Pastoral Team.

5.4 Staff are reminded that an appropriate record of bullying incidents must be maintained by the Named Person (Pastoral Head/Pupil Support Key Teacher) and that the information recorded by the school may be the subject of freedom of information requests by parents, carers, members of the public and journalists.

## **6.0 Staff Training**

6.1 On an annual basis Braes High School staff will participate in at least one training event, organised or led by the anti-bullying co-ordinator.

6.2 The anti-bullying policy will be reviewed on a three year cycle involving a range of partners such as: Parent Council, Pupil Review Groups including the Equalities Group and Rights Respecting Schools Group and relevant DHT.

---

<sup>5</sup> Article 3 "Adults must do what is best for me"

## Appendix 1 – Prejudice-based bullying<sup>6</sup>

Children and young people can experience bullying for a variety of reasons; where they live, their sexual orientations, gender, disability, the colour of their skin, what clothes they wear or what team they support. The one thing that these have in common is difference or perceived difference – some children and young people don't see or understand diversity, they still only see difference.<sup>7</sup>

Difference, or perceived difference, can be a catalyst for children and young people being bullied. If you would like to find out more about the different types of prejudice-based bullying listed below, visit our useful links section.

### Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, together with a reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to continue and go undetected.

### Body Image

Body image is hugely important to children and young people and bullying because of body image can have a significantly negative impact. For example, a child or young person who is noticeably over or underweight may find that they are particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour.

### Homophobic and Bi-phobic bullying

Homophobic and bi-phobic bullying is mainly directed towards young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) or young people who are questioning their sexuality. However, it can also be directed at young people who do not conform to strict gender 'norms'. For example, a boy who doesn't like football may stand out as being different. Ultimately, any young person can be homophobic bullied and any young person can display homophobic attitudes, which should be challenged.

### Transgender

Is an umbrella term used to describe someone who does not conform to society's view of being male or female. Children and young people who are experiencing confusion over their gender identity may be the target of transphobia. Transphobia at its most basic is the fear of a transgender person and the hatred, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice that this fear brings. This can result in bullying behaviour towards an individual because they are not seen to be conforming to gender stereotyping and 'norms'. If children and young people are experiencing confusion over their gender identity, they may be reluctant to challenge bullying behaviour that could attract further attention to them.

### Looked after children

Children and young people who are looked after and accommodated are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons: It may be due to regular changes in schools or where they are placed, which can make forming friendships difficult; they may have poor relationship skills stemming from attachment difficulties; inappropriate reactions to situations as a result of learned behaviours; a reluctance to make friends; low self-esteem, lack of role models and a heightened sense of privacy.

---

<sup>6</sup> Copyright - Respectme, reproduced with permission

<sup>7</sup> Article 2 "All children have these rights"

### Race and Ethnicity

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups, including the gypsy/travelling community, often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture. The status of 'minority' in a school, community or organisation can often make a child or young person the focus for those involved in bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they 'deserve' to be treated differently or with less respect.

### Religion and Belief

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths, or having no faith, can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may fuel bullying.

### Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out as a target for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be.

### Sexism and Gender

Gender inequality and stereotyping can leave children and young people, and in particular girls, who do not conform to these norms vulnerable to bullying.

Bullying in the form of derogatory language, online comments and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman if they do not behave in such a way towards others. Personality traits that do not fit in to the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can make children and young people a target for their actual or perceived difference. These terms can be of an explicit gender-based nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards someone.

This behaviour should not be confused with sexually aggressive behaviour, which is potentially a form of criminal harassment and should be treated as such. For this reason, in Scotland we recommend against using the term 'sexual bullying' as a descriptor in policies or in practice – it is an unclear and reductive term. Sexual assault and exploitation are not types of bullying, they are abuse.

Gender-based bullying – if unchallenged can lead to a deepening of attitudes and behaviour towards girls or those who do not conform to gender norms that can escalate to more abusive behaviours. This behaviour can take place face-to-face, in private and online or sometimes a combination of all of these. What happens or is shared online will directly impact upon a person and that should be our focus. In all probability, online activity will relate directly to an experience or conversation they have had in person.

Successful anti-bullying work focuses on equalities and developing and modelling relationships based on respect and fairness – and this must include gender.

### Disablist Bullying

People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision, and may result in a need for additional support to be provided.

## Young Carers

The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.

## Social and Economic Prejudice

Bullying due to social and economic status can take place in any group no matter how little diversity exists in it. Small differences in perceived class/family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, belongings, clothing, hygiene, etc. can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group or class. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent in some locations.

**Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2010<sup>8</sup>**, we have a duty to assess all new policies and guidance to ensure it fulfils our duties under the Act. The Equality Act 2010 sets out a range of individual characteristics that are 'Protected' from discrimination and unfair treatment including bullying. All children have the right to feel safe regardless of Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion and belief, Sex, Sexual orientation.

All anti-bullying guidance should include all of the protected characteristics as well as other issues that may see children discriminated against such as body image or socio economic status.

Bullying, whether linked to prejudicial attitudes or not, can sometimes create additional support needs for children and young people. There is specific legislation in this area in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009. Further support can be accessed at [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk)

---

<sup>8</sup> Article 4 "The Government should make sure my rights are respected"

## **Appendix 2 – Support for Parents/Carers/Young People**

If your child is being bullied and would like to speak to an adult in confidence, they can contact:  
**ChildLine on 0800 1111.**

If you are worried about your child and would like to talk to someone in confidence, you can call:  
**ParentLine Scotland on 08000 28 22 33.**

For further information:

**respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service.**

respectme's website offers practical advice and guidance for adults on addressing bullying behaviour. There is also a section specifically for children and young people offering practical advice on what to do if they're being bullied.

[www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

### **ChildLine**

ChildLine's website has a bullying section for young people and adults.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **Childnet International**

Childnet International works in partnership with other organisations to help make the internet a safe place for children and young people.

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

### **Cybermentors**

A social networking place where children and young people can talk about bullying with mentors their own age.

[www.cybermentors.org.uk](http://www.cybermentors.org.uk)  
[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

### **CEOP**

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre website provides information and advice for online safety.

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

### **LGBT Youth Scotland**

[www.lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk)

### **Families on the Outside**

[www.familiesoutside.org.uk](http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk)

## **Appendix 3 – Summary**

For the purposes of this policy we define bullying as behaviour, which may or may not be deliberate, by one person or a group, which upsets, hurts, harms or injures another, impacting directly on their quality of life. Bullying may take many forms, including verbal, physical and social behaviour, and increasingly it may involve the use of technology, such as mobile phones or computers. It is likely to be associated with a power difference between those who bully and those who are bullied, to lead to hurt, fear and anxiety, and is often the result of a difference, perceived or real.

Bullying behaviour is a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **Bullying behaviours may include:**

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours
- Hitting, tripping, kicking
- Stealing and damaging belongings
- Sending an abusive text, email or instant message, or posting an abusive comment on a social networking site (cyberbullying)
- Making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied
- Targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be. This may include racism, sexism, disability, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia as well as differences in socioeconomic background.

### **What do we do when bullying behaviours occur?**

- Take account of the pupil's past experiences, any additional support needs and the behaviours exhibited by those experiencing bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour.
- Pupils experiencing bullying behaviours will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of strategies.

### **Strategies which may be used include:**

- De-escalation strategies using restorative approaches
- Physical separation where necessary and where possible
- OTB referral to Named Person (Pastoral Head/Pupil Support Key Teacher)
- Restorative meeting
- Involvement of the Campus Cop
- Involve parent/carer. Refer parents/carers to support helplines/websites - Appendix 2
- Use of the lunchtime club, safe place at interval/lunch
- Detention
- Programme of internal exclusion or temporary exclusion is not a sanction or punishment for bullying behaviour and will only be used in cases of extreme or sustained instances of bullying behaviour to support planning increased support where appropriate

**Staff response:**

- Initially reassure the pupil, in many cases the member of staff may be able to deal effectively with the incident on the spot.
- Record the incident on OTB referral. The Level 2 'Bullying' checkbox should be ticked with a brief summary of incident and investigation. Teacher action checkbox should also be ticked or written in notes before being referred on.
- Where appropriate, pass the referral on to Guidance/SMT for action.

Staff are reminded that an appropriate record of bullying incidents must be maintained and that the information recorded by the school may be the subject of freedom of information requests by parents, carers, members of the public and journalists.

**Pastoral Head response:**

- Obtain details of the incident from the victim.
- Discuss how he/she proposes to deal with the incident.
- Obtain further details from witnesses as appropriate.
- Question the bully and establish what has occurred.
- Give appropriate advice and support to the victim.
- Contact victim's parent.
- Deal appropriately with the bully in accordance with Anti-bullying policy.
- Contact the bully's parent and involve as appropriate.
- Offer appropriate counselling to the bully.
- If disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, refer to House Depute.
- A restorative meeting should take place if both parties are agreeable.
- A follow up meeting should take place to support the victim.

**SMT response:**

- Discuss the incident with Pastoral Head.
- Decide on action to be taken.
- Ensure the proper procedures are followed, as described above.
- Where it is deemed appropriate, take disciplinary action.
- Record the action taken.
- Ensure appropriate parties are informed of action.