



Based on Fife Council Education Polices and Guidance – Getting It Right in Fife Schools: Anti-Bullying Policy (previously CWG 4) last revised December 2015

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“The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust based upon shared values across the school community, including parents, whether for young people in school or those not in school.”

Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3 (2008)

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(Information above in italics is taken from Developing in Faith)

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1. Introduction

This anti-bullying policy has been created using Fife Council's Getting It Right in Fife Schools: Anti-Bullying Policy (December 2015). This document sits alongside the St Andrew's Cluster anti-bullying policy.

Fife Council Education and Children's Services Directorate is committed to the personal and social wellbeing of all children and young people growing up in Fife. Through our schools we aim to provide community, social and learning environments free from any threat or fear, as a matter of right and as a prerequisite to effective learning and development.

This anti-bullying policy holds together all the strategies, procedures and practices related to anti-bullying work across all schools in the St Andrew's Cluster.

This policy is a public and explicit commitment to action that the schools in the St Andrew's Cluster to keep account and be accountable for anti-bullying work.

This draft policy will be finalised through genuine consultation and involvement of staff, pupils and parent/carers.

2. What the school means by 'bullying behaviour'

In this context St Andrew's Cluster schools, through all staff who work within it, is unequivocally opposed to bullying. We fully recognise the damage which bullying can do to young people's lives – both those who display bullying behaviours and those who are experiencing these 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.

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
- social behavior
- excluding a pupil from a social group
- 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.

In addressing the issue of bullying we recognise that children and young people 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 children and their parents and carers understand this distinction. It should also be recognised of course that unresolved conflict might, in time, lead to bullying.

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 children and young people being bullied. It can also create confusion around the nature of response or intervention which is required to get best outcomes for children. Bullying is a mixture of behaviours and impacts, and adult intervention should be guided by the impact on a child or young person.

3. A recognition of prejudice-based bullying

Our school communities are 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 children 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;
- sectarianism;
- gender;
- sexual orientation;
- substance misuse.

Although only some of these characteristics may apply in schools; age, marriage and civil partnerships are also considered to be relevant as children 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 those whose sexual orientation includes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. The operational anti-bullying policy created at school level must take account of these protected characteristic groups and should build upon the work, already established in Fife schools, to support LGBTI (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersexed) young people.

Appendix 4 of the Fife Council Anti-Bullying Policy, which gives further details of prejudice based bullying can be found in **Appendix One** of this policy.

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

- Asylum seeker or refugee status
- Travelling community
- Body Image
- Looked after status
- Social or economic status (including poverty)
- Young carer responsibilities
- Imprisonment of parents, siblings, or other family members

(The above examples are not an exhaustive list and may change over time)

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4. **What steps the school are taking to ensure that the ethos is positive, respectful, caring and open – as bullying behaviours will not thrive in this ethos** (*how do we show that we value every child and young person*)

The St Andrew's Cluster schools have developed this anti-bullying policy to reflect the needs of the children, young people and families within their communities.

'Respect' is a core values of each of the St Andrew's Cluster schools and is something that is regularly reinforced to all members of the school community. It is believed that if you show respect and receive respect from others then this should in turn reduce any bullying behaviours.

However, where this is not successful, the school will strive to deal sensitively with this situation, taking account of the child or young person's past experiences, additional support needs the child or young person may have and the behaviours exhibited by those experiencing bullying behaviour or those displaying bullying behaviour.

At all times the school will aim to:

- Develop a positive ethos and an effective approach to relationships and behavior
- Encourage the personal and social development of all children
- Protect children and ensure their care and welfare

When dealing with incidents the schools will ensure that the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators (refer to **Appendix 2**) are considered when planning the support provided for children who experience instances of bullying or children who exhibit bullying behaviours.

To compliment this anti-bullying policy, a variety of information leaflets have been produced to support staff, children and young people, and parent/carers including:

- Respect (**Appendix 3**)
- Anti-Bullying advice for pupils (**Appendix 4**)
- Restorative Approaches and Peer Mediation Information for pupils (**Appendix 5**)
- Advice on being a responsible citizen online (**Appendix 6**)
- Nurture leaflet (**Appendix 7**)
- Coping Strategies (**Appendix 8**)
- Reasons why young people may self-harm (**Appendix 9**)
- Child Protection (Care and Welfare) information (**Appendix 10**)
- Fife Council Education Polices and Guidance – Getting It Right in Fife Schools: Anti-Bullying Policy (**Appendix 11**)
- Respect me Single Point of Contact anti-bullying PowerPoint (**Appendix 12**)

Each school has appointed a member of staff to become the single point of contact (SPoC) for anti-bullying. This member of staff has been trained and will be a key person in the school for driving forward the anti-bullying policy and practices across the school. At St Andrew's RC High School, this person is Mr Gordon Wood, Depute Headteacher.

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5. How the school will reinforce this ethos in relation to bullying

The school will continue to ensure that 'respect' is a key aim of all those in the school community. In recent discussions with pupils (through the Pupil Council), the following examples of how you can show respect were identified and are on display in the school:

- Treating people the way that you would like to be treated
- Being kind to others – being friendly, caring and understanding
- Treating everyone fairly and equally — even if the other person is a bit different
- Speaking appropriately to others – thinking about your tone of voice when communicating with others (so no screaming or shouting!)
- Making sure that your actions do not threaten or intimidate others
- Not playing roughly with others that could result in you or someone else being injured—so no punching, kicking or physically hurting anyone in anyway
- Not saying anything that could be mistaken as racist, sexist or homophobic
- Using any form of social media with care to ensure you do not hurt someone's feelings (this could be classed as cyber bullying)

By dealing with any bullying behaviours in a consistent manner - and supporting both the pupil displaying the bullying behaviours and the pupil experiencing these bullying behaviours – the school will strive to educate all pupils that these behaviours are not acceptable.

The school will use restorative approaches as these:

- focuses on the harm caused rather than the rules broken
- shows equal concern and commitment to all those involved
- supports the person harmed by given them a chance to have a say in what happens
- supports the person responsible by providing an opportunity to accept responsibility and make amends
- recognises that the school is a community and its members have a responsibility to behave in a respectful manner towards each other

The school will also use peer mediation where appropriate to help resolve conflict, especially in a situation where the pupils have previously been friends.

Peer mediation involves trained mediators assisting pupils in conflict through a series of steps so that they can find their own way of resolving their problems. Difficulties and disagreement are faced and brought out into the open. Through acknowledgement and careful exploration comes shared understanding which usually leads to a negotiated, constructive, non-violent way of managing the conflict. Peer mediation offers those involved in the peer relationship issue:

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- A chance to tell their side of the story and feel heard
- To understand better how the situation happened
- To understand how it can be avoided another time
- To feel understood by the others involved
- To find a way to move on and feel better about themselves

The school will also use appropriate de-escalation strategies to support schools staff to manage very challenging pupil behaviour practically, effectively and safely. The de-escalation strategies are taken from Fife Council Education Service 'De-Escalation Training Pack – a handbook for staff and staff trainers':

Teach good behaviour – don't just expect it

Children who come from chaotic family backgrounds are unlikely to have learned self-regulation skills. It is unrealistic to have expectations that all children will know how to behave. Some will need to be shown and have opportunities to rehearse:

- ☺ School is a different context from home
- ☺ Rules in school are often different compared with home
- ☺ These rules have to be made explicit

For example:

- ☺ We ask if we need to leave the room
- ☺ We listen when someone is talking
- ☺ We don't swear here – it's a classroom

Model the behaviour you want to see – behave as you wish the pupils to behave. For example:

- ☺ Avoid meeting anger and agitation with anger and agitation
- ☺ Avoid taking things personally
- ☺ Acknowledge – don't react

Creating a positive classroom environment for all learners – for example:

- ☺ Effective teaching (awareness of different teaching and learning styles, additional support needs of your learners)
- ☺ Model the behaviour and attitude you want to see (as discussed above)
- ☺ Teach good behaviour – don't just expect it
- ☺ Use non-confrontational practices – avoid confrontational practices
- ☺ Ignore secondary behaviours if possible
- ☺ Use restorative approaches
- ☺ Work at building positive relationships
- ☺ Be consistent
- ☺ Have clear classroom routines
- ☺ Keep instructions short and simple
- ☺ Carefully consider seating arrangements in your classroom
- ☺ Catch them being good!
- ☺ Consider your body language and tone of voice
- ☺ Use the language of choice – "if you choose to do this then this will be the consequence of that choice" – this allows pupils to take responsibility for own actions
- ☺ Praise good choices

6. Rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community – including Senior Leadership, staff, parent/carers and pupils *(including how we train our teachers to anticipate, identify and deal with all forms of bullying)*

Our Catholic schools aim to promote a culture where bullying is unacceptable.

Pupils will be educated in the school's high expectations of respecting each other and treating each other appropriately through:

- Anti-bullying events
- Assemblies
- Displays
- School values
- Peer mediator training
- Restorative conversations
- Staff training to help ensure staff are modeling the expected behaviour of the pupils
- Religious Education (Gospel values)
- Rights Respecting schools (through Primary schools)
- Global citizenship

The above list is not exhaustive and will be adapted over time.

The single point of contact member of staff from the school will help to coordinate the above.

7. How we promote pupil participation in school life through active involvement in our Pupil Council and other groups

Pupils will be given opportunities to be involved in decision making in a variety of ways including through the Pupil Council. This is where a class representative is elected to represent the views of the class at meetings with members of staff. This allows the pupils to have an input into important decision in the school, including areas such as this anti-bullying policy.

Section 5 (How the school will reinforce this ethos in relation to bullying) in this document includes examples gathered from the Pupil Council meetings.

Focus groups of pupils, staff and parent/carers will also be used as appropriate to gather views from all members of the school community.

Pupil Council information and displays will be available on Parent Evenings to highlight the importance of the Pupil Council and the work that they are involved with.

Other groups for pupils to be involved with include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charity groups • Sporting groups • Eco group • Fairtrade group • Health and Wellbeing group • Rights Respecting group • Citizen group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choir • Musical activities • Playground helpers • Buddies • Prefects • House Captains
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(The above groups and terms will differ depending on the school).

These groups help to promote pupil participation in school life – and helps to emphasise the positive ethos of the school.

8. What will happen when a concern about bullying behaviour is reported or observed

- A responsible adult will discuss the concern with the pupil who reports the alleged bullying (the victim of the bullying behavior) and an initial investigation will take place by a relevant member of staff
- The class teacher may pass the details to the relevant member of management (depending on the nature of the alleged incident)
- Parent/carer of the pupil who is experiencing the bullying behaviour will be contacted
- Pupil displaying bullying behaviour will be spoken to by the relevant member of management
- The situation would be monitored
- Pupil displaying bullying behaviour parent/carer will be invited in to the school for a discussion on the next steps to help ensure a long-term solution is found, if appropriate
- Depending on the nature of the bullying an appropriate sanction will be put in place
- If deemed very serious, the pupil displaying bullying behaviour may be excluded internally/externally

When dealing with any report of bullying behaviour it is important that the staff involved take a restorative approach at all stages:

- Do not panic and keep an open mind
- Listen – give the children involved your full attention - and take time to discover the reasons for the bullying
- Let the child know bullying is never acceptable: they deserve to feel safe
- Gently encourage them to talk, finding out what happened, who was involved, where and when – asking open questions and writing down the responses if this helps
- Do not label the individual or group as 'bullies'
- Be prepared for a strong reaction from parents and carers and children and young people
- Be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behavior
- Address what's happening behind the behaviour, even when the bullying has stopped

9. What support mechanisms will be in place for all those involved in bullying behaviour

Support will be in place for those pupils who display bullying behaviours and those who are experiencing these bullying behaviours.

These include:

- Restorative approaches
- Peer mediation
- Advice on being a responsible citizen online

Partner agencies, under GIRFEC, can be contacted to offer appropriate support.

It may be necessary to hold a Child Wellbeing Pathway meeting and/or create a de-escalation plan/risk assessment - if deemed appropriate.

Central to our overall approach is encouraging and supporting the development of positive relationships. We will continue to aim to ensure that children do not bully others because they understand the harm which this can cause. All pupils will be educated regarding this harm that bullying behaviours can cause – and then be in a position to make the choice not to cause such harm.

It follows that where children do not make this choice, the school needs to engage with them educationally, supportively and restoratively rather than punitively (Section 1.12 in Fife Council Anti-Bullying Policy (Appendix 8 of this document)). We are committed to working in partnership with parent/carers, identifying shared responsibilities in preventing the occurrence of bullying, ensuring the welfare of children who have experienced the bullying behaviours, and supporting and challenging those displaying the bullying behaviours.

Such an approach may, understandably, be challenged by those who believe that children who bully should experience only negative consequences as a result of their behavior. However, it has been proven that such an approach is ultimately counterproductive.

It is important therefore that all staff, children and parent/carers play an active role in the development and maintenance of the school's anti-bullying policy. This engagement, involvement and ownership will hopefully contribute significantly to its effectiveness.

10. Recording and monitoring processes

The school's anti-bullying policy should provide clear guidance to staff on the requirement of recording incidents of bullying/bullying behaviour.

Currently the Cluster schools are using internal process to log incidents of bullying behaviours. However, Fife Council are moving to a system of logging alleged incidents of bullying behaviour on SEEMiS Click+Go. This will require appropriate staff training.

When staff have been trained in using SEEMiS Click+Go, incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded using the Bullying and Equalities module within the school's SEEMiS Click+Go system.

Appropriate training regarding the recording of bullying incidents will be provided by the school's Single Point of Contact (SPoC).

Information recorded in SEEMiS can be used to respond to freedom of information (FOI) requests under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. As such, information recorded in the school SEEMiS Bullying & Equalities module, when used by the Directorate to respond to FOI, should not provide details of the individuals involved in any bullying incident. The Directorate will redact any personal data that could be used to identify the children and young people concerned.

The school will require to provide an analysis of incidents of bullying in the annual Standards and Quality Report for Fife Council Area Committees – and will require to use the information logged on SEEMiS to form the basis of this analysis.

11. Conclusion

Bullying is never acceptable. It is not a normal part of growing up.

It does not build character – trust, acceptance, consistency and safety builds character.

We must all be good role models in the truest sense and remember – we can make a difference.

We will strive to promote the human dignity of each member of the school community at all times.

Our school community will work to build resilience in children and young people, to ensure positive mental health.

Appendix One – Prejudice-based bullying information from Fife Council's anti-bullying policy

Based on Fife Council Education Policies and Guidance – Getting It Right in Fife Schools: Anti-Bullying Policy (previously CWG 4) last revised December 2015

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Prejudice-based bullying¹

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.

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 bullying

Homophobic 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 homophobically 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.

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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.

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.

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Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2010, 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 <http://www.enquire.org.uk/pcp/pdf/ASL-Act-2009-changes.pdf>

Appendix 2 – GIRFEC wellbeing

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Appendix 3 – Respect leaflet

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Appendix 4 – Anti-bullying policy leaflet

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Appendix 5 – Restorative Approaches and Peer Mediation Information leaflet

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Appendix 6 – Advice on being a responsible citizen online leaflet

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Appendix 7 – Nurture leaflet

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Appendix 8 - Coping Strategies

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Appendix 9 - Reasons why young people may self-harm

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Appendix 10 - Child Protection (Care and Welfare) information

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Appendix 11 – Fife Council Education Policies and Guidance – Getting It Right in Fife Schools: Anti-Bullying Policy

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Appendix 12 - Respect me Single Point of Contact anti-bullying PowerPoint

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