Anti-bullying
POLICY

Inverclyde Council

Anti-bullying policy

Date of Publication Nov 2021
Date of Review Nov 2024

Responsible Officer - Head of Education

Inverclyde
council

CONTENTS

A message from the corporate director

In Inverclyde we work hard with school communities to develop positive and strong relationships across the board. It is important that these strong relationships underpin our anti-bullying policy and that the policy listens to the voice and needs of those affected. It was therefore vital that the development of this policy was informed by the voice of young people, parents and staff.

My thanks to those who work on a daily basis to nurture the strong relationships that exist in our schools and to those who continue to work together to ensure that this policy is everyday practice.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development

Anti-bullying POLICY

1 A welcome from our writers

An anti-bullying policy means safety. It means protecting people. It means there is someone willing to listen and to help. It means it's ok to speak up and should encourage us to do so! Inverclyde aspires to be a No Bullying Zone!

Youth Council statement

This policy works in conjunction with Inverclyde Council's Positive Relationships Policy, informed by Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour.

Education Scotland, 2013

2 Introducing the policy

Inverclyde Council has actively embraced a nurture strategy that supports a relationship based approach, creating a positive culture and ethos across its educational establishments, children's services, and youth provision.

The approach is based on strong partnership working and a shared understanding of the most effective means to meet needs.

This policy draws from these drivers and is aligned to Respect for All - The national approach to anti-bullying for Scotland's children and young people.
respect*me*, 2017

It applies to all education provision that is maintained by Inverclyde Council.

3 Our aims

To ensure all children, young people and adults feel safe and are able to build relationships that prevent bullying behaviours.

- To ensure all young people and adults feel safe.

- To state that the views of children and young people must be taken into account when staff are looking at possible bullying behaviours.

- To ensure that all bullying behaviours are attended to, by all, in line with the Respect For All values of:

  - **Fairness** ● **Respect** ● **Equality** ● **Inclusion**

- To ensure all establishments/services follow a coherent, consistent approach to preventing and responding to bullying behaviours.

- To uphold the rights of our children and young people in line with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989).

- That all education establishments in Inverclyde use this policy to develop their own anti-bullying policy, through consultation with staff, parents and pupils that aligns with this local authority policy.

Nurturing Inverclyde
Getting it Right for every Child, Citizen and Community
through promoting positive relationships in our education establishments
(November 2019)

The Nurturing Inverclyde approach is central to the delivery of the Education Service.
Education Scotland Oct 2018

Bullying behaviour is a clear breach of children's rights.
respect*me*

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly and proportionately.

Bullying should never be considered as a typical part of growing up.

Inverclyde council

4   A shared vision

We aim to prevent bullying behaviour by:

- Raising awareness of prejudice based bullying and its impact (see appendix 1 for more information).

- Emphasising that bullying behaviour is a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Ensuring every child and young person will have the strategies to develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with others, building skills for learning, life and work.

- Equipping children, young people, parents, carers and staff with the skills and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying behaviours (whether online or face-to-face) appropriately.

- Ensuring anyone who requires help will know how to access support. This support will be respectful and confidential.

- Providing a robust set of agreed procedures to all establishments to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to preventing and responding to bullying behaviours across all stages and sectors.

- Ensuring the Respect For All principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality and Inclusion are embedded across establishments/services.

- Ensuring relevant legislation and policy is understood and followed by all.

Inverclyde
council

5   How our policy was developed

Following the initial engagement with respect*me* an Implementation Team was established to develop the policy through consultation. This enabled the policy to be built from the ground up.

The consultation involved at least 183 pupils from a range of Inverclyde schools including 4 secondary schools and 11 primary schools. Pupils took part in workshops allowing them the opportunity to explore how the wanted schools to deal with bullying, what children and young people needed from staff, parents and one another and a chance to think about how to report it and where they want information to be held/used. We also gained the voices of young people beyond the school walls through the local Youth Council that includes two elected MSYP's and discussions with approximately 100 secondary aged young people through workshops at a local, annual youth conference, 'Clyde Conversations.' All of this information has been used to inform the development of the policy as well as a practical resource in the form of a large anti bullying charter to display that will be gifted to all local schools, developed and designed in complete partnership with children and young people.

Our parents were also involved via some local interactive engagement sessions, through dialogue with several of our parent councils and the parent council chairs. Our education staff were encouraged to respond to a questionnaire regarding their views on the new policy and several of them took part in the survey. Our education managers were also surveyed through a questionnaire format.

respectme
Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service

Inverclyde
council

6   So what is bullying behaviour?

Inverclyde Council accepts the definition of bullying as set out in Respect For All (2017).

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.

respect*me*, 2015

Our pupil focus groups wanted to explore this definition more.

What is bullying behaviour?

- It can be a one-off or take place many times.
- The policy should note that bullying behaviour is not always deliberate nor intended to cause harm, although sometimes it can be.
- For some pupils it can be very isolating.
- It is sometimes linked to discrimination.
- Bullying behaviour can involve an abuse of power.
- The impact of online images used with or without consent should be stated.

We must be careful not to label people as bullies or victims. This does not change behaviours.

Online bullying is as harmful face-to-face bullying. It is never acceptable.

Bullying behaviour is perceived power and we need to realise we all have power and can speak up.

It is also clear that bullying behaviour is a clear breach of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

Respect for All, 2017

Bullying behaviour can harm people in terms of their wellbeing and/or physically. One of the aspects to emphasise is that it is the impact of bullying behaviour that is crucial. It can result from a one off action or be repeated over time. This can include:

- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked.
- Having belongings taken or damaged.
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online).
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone.
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online).
- Being targeted because of who you are, or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online).
- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online.

Inverclyde Council will address online bullying effectively when we address it as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate kind of bullying. This is about where bullying happens, not what happens. Staff and pupils may find it of benefit to look into the Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016) for further advice in this area.

https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2016/09/enhancing-learning-teaching-through-use-digital-technology/documents/00505855-pdf/00505855-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00505855.pdf

Inverclyde
council

Anti-bullying POLICY

7   What impact can bullying behaviour have?

Understanding the impact rather that looking for a pattern or trying to prove intent is key:

- Increased absence
- Loneliness and isolation
- Low mood and anxiety
- Withdrawal from social situations
- Loss of confidence/self esteem
- Physical/mental health issues
- Feelings of loss of control
- Not feeling safe
- Family level issues

The impact an incident has had on a child or young person is more important than whether it is classed as bullying."
Respect for All (2017)

8   Prejudice Based Bullying - the Equalities Act 2010

Bullying behaviour may be the result of treating people differently because they appear different or are thought to be different. This is what is meant by prejudice. This could lead to behaviour and/or the use of bullying language that could be racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or discriminatory towards disability or faith. Bullying language can also be based on characteristics unique to a person's identity or circumstance, socio-economic, family circumstances or appearance. There is a need to address the root cause of prejudice as well as effectively respond to incidents in all settings as they arise.

We will challenge discrimination, harassment and victimisation

We will promote equal opportunities for all

We will foster and maintain positive relationships amongst all in our society

We will ensure that ALL bullying is treated fairly and in same way

Here are the protected characteristics in the Equality Act (2010). It is against the law to discriminate against people because of these:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

As well as these characteristics Inverclyde does not condone bullying behaviour against people for the following reasons that are nor covered by equalities legislation, which is in line with *Respect for All*:

- Additional support needs
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Body image and physical appearance
- Intersectionality
- Care experienced children and young people
- Sectarianism
- Socio-economic prejudice
- Young carers

More information about these categories can be found in appendix 1.

Inverclyde council

9   Bullying behaviour and the law

Some bullying behaviours are more serious and may be classified as criminal acts e.g. hate crime; child sexual exploitation or gender based violence, including domestic abuse.

Incidents where a child or young person feels they are being coerced or pressured into something, such as engaging in sexualised behaviour, should be reported to Police Scotland.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and it is essential that children and young people are aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. For example in terms of sexual imagery the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act (2016) which makes the non-consensual sharing of intimate images a crime.

Our children and young people though that it would be useful to have some more information about sexting included in the policy. Below you will see information from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

What is sexting?

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

What the law says

Sexting can be seen as harmless, but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. A young person is breaking the law if they:

- Take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend

- Share an explicit image or video of a child, even if it's shared between children of the same age

NSPCC, 2019

10   Anti-Bullying Establishment Charter

Anti-bullying
school charter

★ Help me to understand my rights and reassure me

★ Listen to me, include me and give me options

★ Help everyone to feel safe and in control

★ Take action with time scales and be consistent

★ Support everyone involved and help us to move forward

★ Feedback to me/us

Staff will:
- Work with children and young people to understand bullying and build trusting relationships
- Listen and be aware
- Take action on behalf of the school

Parents/carers will:
- Remain calm and help me to feel safe
- Work in partnership with schools to make things better for everyone involved
- Respect my choices

Pupils will:
- Treat others with kindness and respect
- Report bullying and encourage others to speak up
- Be open to discussions and accept support

ARTICLE 1
ALL CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS

ARTICLE 3
ADULTS MUST DO WHAT'S BEST FOR ME

ARTICLE 12
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE LISTENED TO AND TAKEN SERIOUSLY

ARTICLE 19
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM BEING HURT OR BADLY TREATED

Inverclyde council

11   Inverclyde Council's approach to bullying

In Inverclyde we have adopted an approach to whole establishment nurture that is based on the understanding that relationships are key. This approach, based on mutual respect, creates an ethos that minimises the ability of bullying behaviour to thrive. For several years now we have used the Positive Relationships Positive Policy. This policy aligns with the 'Respect for All' document, which is the national advice given to education authorities and establishments from respect*me*
http://www.gov.dscot/Publications/2017/11/6766

Many ways have been identified to prevent bullying behaviour:

- Anti-bullying professional learning
- Recognising and realising children's rights
- Creating inclusive and supportive learning environments
- Solution oriented approaches
- Nurturing approaches
- Curriculum for excellence

Respect for All, 2017

In Inverclyde we also recognise that bullying behaviour may take place outwith the school day and through the use of social media. This type of situation may also have impact on children and young people in relation to their education experience. As such, establishments must still take these situations seriously and seek to work with partners to tackle this type of issue.

Our consultation, however, identified two clear methods that are used with success in Inverclyde - **Restorative Approaches** and **Mentors in Violence Prevention**.

Restorative approaches

Restorative Approaches aim to restore calm to a situation and move it on to find a resolution. They can be used at different levels:

- **As preventative** - to promote positive relationships within the whole school community.
- **As responsive** - and repairing when difficulties arise.

The approach involves including an individual in finding solutions to a relationship based issues, such as bullying behaviour. Instead of asking 'Who's to blame and how are we going to punish them?' focus is put on reasons, causes, responsibilities and feelings. Those involved are asked questions such as 'who has been affected and how?' and 'How can we put it right and learn from this experience?'

Education Scotland

CUE card used in restorative conversations.

Restorative conversation

Be...

Curious and concerned
• What happened?

Understanding
• How did you feel when that happened?
• What were you thinking?
• What are you thinking now?
• Who do you think might have been affected by this?
• How do you think......might be feeling about this?

Empowering
• What do you think you might be able to do to help sort things out?
• How might you stop this from happening again?

Inverclyde council

Mentors in Violence Prevention

The Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP) is an approach to gender violence and bullying prevention that was first developed in

1993 in the United States at the North-eastern University's Centre for the Study of Sport in society by Dr Jackson Katz. It was piloted in St Stephen's High School and Port Glasgow High School and is now found in all high schools across Inverclyde. In 2013 Inverclyde Council received a Silver Award from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities for its work in this area. You can find out more about it in this short video clip: https://awards.cosla.gov.uk/project/one-to-watch-inverclyde-council-mentors-in-violence-prevention-programme/

The Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme is changing attitudes to violence and bullying and empowering classmates and friends to be supportive to those being victimised. The project aims to raise awareness of violence, in particular gender based violence and bullying, within a school setting and encourages young men and women from all backgrounds to take on leadership roles in their schools and to deliver sessions to younger peers to discuss these issues.

The project is focused on an innovative 'bystander' model that empowers each student to take an active role in promoting a positive school climate. By using roleplaying, students are helped to understand their options in response to incidents of harassment, abuse, or violence - before, during, or after the fact. This programme is delivered in a manner that emphasises the importance of personal safetly for all.

12   Supporting children and young people

Therefore when responding to incidents or accusations of bullying the approach should be to ask:

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What does the child or young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do about it?
- What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

Support for children and young people affected by bullying behaviour is crucial to meeting their wellbeing needs. This should take place immediately after an incident and continue for as long as it is required. This is crucial to mitigate the impact of bullying behaviour. All staff and parents could potentially have a role in this process and it is important to listen to children and young people and take on board their views regarding the types of support that would be required.

Children and young people who are exhibiting bullying behaviour will need help and support to:

- Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way.
- Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings.
- Understand the impact of their behaviour on other people.
- Repair relationships.

We need to help children and young people who demonstrate bullying behaviour by providing clear expectations about behaviour as well as providing a range of ways to respond. This can include taking steps to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends. We need to challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour. Consideration should be given to any factors that may impact upon a child or young person's wellbeing, including whether any additional support for learning is required.

13   Engaging with parents

Our consultations with parents demonstrated a desire to maintain the generally supportive relationships that they had with our establishments. This was seen as a key aspect for working to prevent or respond to bullying behaviour. Parents also expressed a wish to influence how information about the policy and establishment's responses to it should be disseminated. They suggested the following methods.

Electronic means of communication

- Videos of pupils explaining the policy in the foyer of the establishment and tweeted.
- Local authority policy and establishment response to policy to be placed on its twitter and website.

Face-to-face engagement

- Information given to parents on policy and practice during induction at primary 1 and primary 7 phases of schooling.
- Encourage older pupils to explain the policy to younger ones during assembly time.

Other means of sharing the policy

- The main points could be included on a news letter with a hyperlink to the entire policy made available.
- The policy should be available in reception areas and promoted at parent evenings.
- It should be referenced in establishment handbooks.

Inverclyde
council

14   Roles and responsibilities

The senior manager in each education establishment (head teacher, head of centre or equivalent) has overall responsibility for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour and promoting respectful relationships. They can do this by:

- Ensuring that the Positive Relationships policy is understood and implemented by all staff. The relational approaches promoted in this document are key to creating a nurturing culture and ethos, which supports the prevention of and response to bullying behaviour.
- Promoting and role-modelling relational approaches.
- Avoiding the use of unhelpful labels such as 'bully' and 'victim'.
- Being familiar with legislation, particularly in relation to prejudiced based bullying.
- Ensuring that their own establishment follows the Inverclyde Anti-Bullying policy and develops practice that is in line with this policy.
- Making sure that all staff within their establishment have a thorough knowledge of the policy on anti-bullying as well as their roles and responsibilities in relation to this issue.
- Identifying a lead for anti-bullying within their establishment.
- Ensuring that all children and young people within their establishment know how to report any concerns about bullying behaviour.
- Promoting and taking seriously the voice of the pupil.
- Promoting the local authority stance on anti-bullying by displaying the Anti-Bullying Charter in a prominent place in their establishment and referring to it in their establishment handbook.
- Making sure that staff follow to all procedures for reporting, recording and responding to incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Monitoring information on incidents of bullying behaviour and taking appropriate action where required.
- Ensuring staff undertake appropriate professional learning opportunities in relation to anti-bullying.
- Consulting with and informing parents in respect of the local authority and establishment anti-bullying policies.
- Working positively with parents through the anti-bullying processes.

All staff must be aware of, and adhere to Inverclyde's policy and procedures in relation to anti-bullying. All staff in each establishment are responsible for:

- Implementing the Positive Relationships policy.
- Contributing to a culture and ethos that promotes of positive relationships and respectful relationships.
- Being aware of, and adhering to, the council's policy and the practices that exist in their establishment to support this policy.
- Avoiding the use of unhelpful labels such as 'bully' and 'victim'.
- Being familiar with legislation, particularly in relation to prejudiced based bullying.
- Assisting children and young people regarding how to recognise and report an incident of bullying behaviour and ensuring that they feel comfortable when they need to use this process.
- Promoting and taking seriously the voice of the pupil.
- Ensuring that they are aware of, and are adhere to, the procedures for monitoring and recording alleged incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Undertaking appropriate professional learning in relation to anti-bullying and relational approaches.
- Promoting and role-modelling relational approaches.
- Working positively with parents through the anti-bullying processes.

Inverclyde council

15 Reporting, recording and responding to concerns

Educational establishments must provide pupils with an array of methods by which they can report alleged incidents of bullying behaviour.

- Establishments must consider ways to promote discreet or anonymous reporting mechanisms for pupils.

- Parents should be informed of how they can raise concerns formally and informally. Reports of alleged bullying made by parents/others will be treated as bullying incidents and schools will aim to complete an investigation and implement any remedial action within 3 working days and communicate the outcome to affected children, young people and their parents. Investigations into alleged incidents of bullying behaviour should begin, in the establishment, on the day the incident is reported. If the incident occurs at the end of the school day or outwith school hours, the investigation should commence at the start of the following school day. If a parent/carer is not satisfied with the way in which the establishment has handled an incident of alleged bullying, they should be referred to Inverclyde Council's complaints procedure.

- It is important for educational establishments to record using the Bullying and Equalities module within SEEMIS Click and Go, which is the main information system used to hold pupil information in Scottish schools. The Scottish Government Guidance on 'Recording and Monitoring of Bullying Incidents in Schools' can be accessed here - https://beta.gov.scot/publications/supplementary-guidance-recording-monitoring-bullying-incidents-schools/

- When recording bullying incidents, the following information must be included:
  - The children and young people involved as well as other adults.
  - The type of bullying experienced - name calling, threats or rumours etc.
  - Any underlying prejudice including details of any protected characteristics.
  - The impact of the bullying incident, including consideration or personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns.
  - Actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

16 When is it not bullying behaviour?

It is important for children and young people to discuss how they feel and help them develop resilience to manage their relationships. We know that children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of growing up and most children and young people have the ability to bounce back from this type of behaviour. Early intervention and prevention are key elements of an approach focused on ensuring we get it right for all of our children and young people.
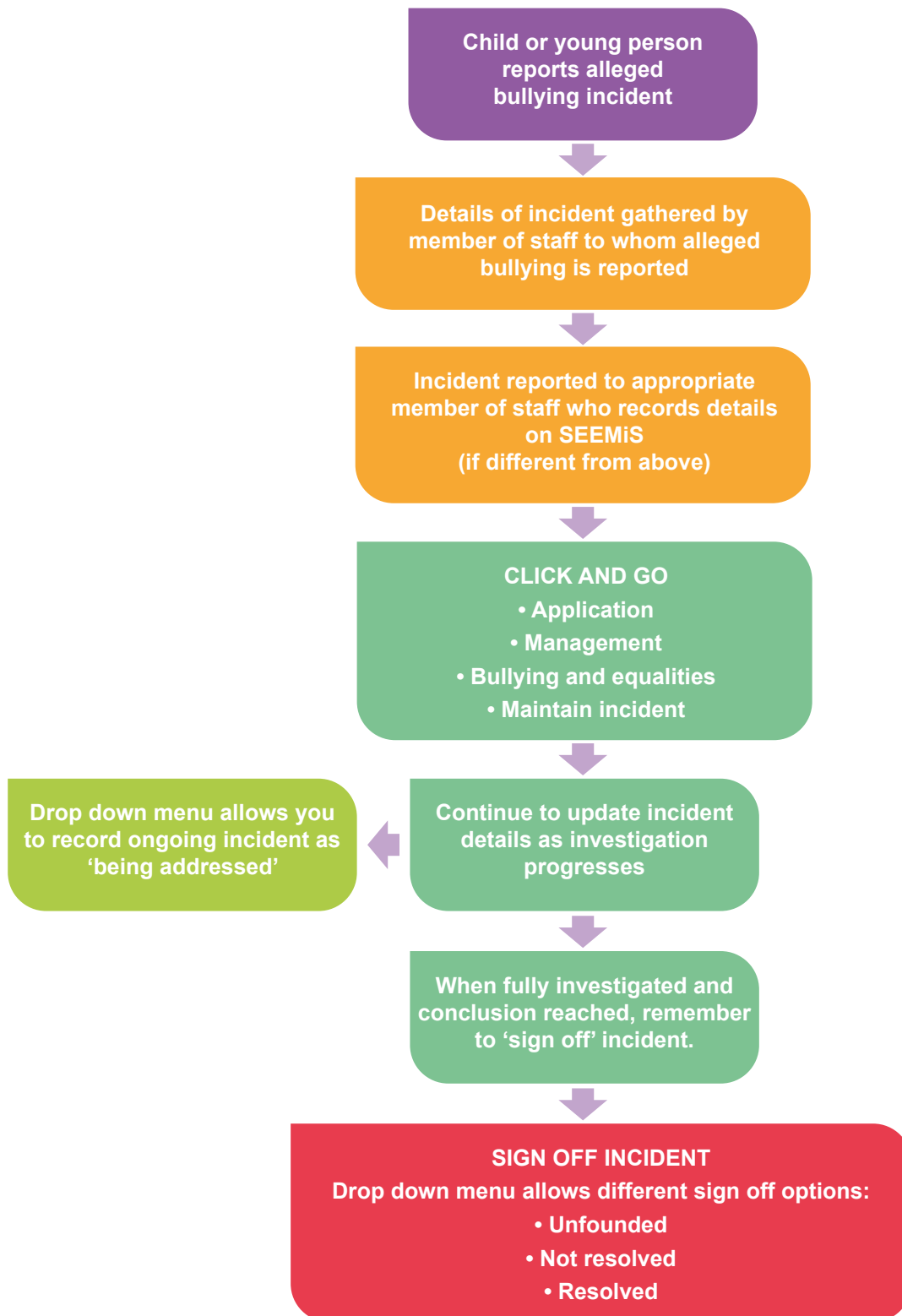
17   Process to be followed

This section of the policy focuses on providing advice in respect to the processes to be followed when an incident of bullying behaviour has allegedly taken place, typically after adults have responded to what happened and the impact it has had. Inverclyde Council's practice and approach to bullying behaviour is detailed in the earlier sections of this policy and this should be reflected in any subsequent recording. All Inverclyde Council staff are directed to the content of Sections 12,13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of this policy on how to approach and respond to concerns about bullying behaviour.

Inverclyde Council staff should use their professional judgement when deciding when to record on the SEEMIS module. In line with the national guidance and this policy, not all disagreements between children and young people are necessarily bullying and staff should consider the behaviour and the impact before deciding if it is bullying behaviour and should be recorded. The purpose of recording is for schools to learn about what kind of bullying is happening in their school and to identify if there are trends or issues that require addressing, based on what the recording tells them. It should be seen as an improvement tool. The following aspects of best practice must be considered:

- All data recording, monitoring and reporting will be undertaken in line with current data protection legislation.

- Recording and monitoring the number and nature of incidents of bullying behaviour ensures that appropriate responses can be made and supports the identification of trends and opportunities for early intervention.

- Information on incidents of bullying behaviour is used for management information purposes and will be monitored by senior managers within each establishment. It may also be discussed as part of the council's quality improvement framework for establishments.

- The monitoring of incidents of bullying behaviour will include monitoring of incidents relating to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- Incidents that happen away from school can still impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people and they will require help and support at these times. Schools may also choose to record incidents (in line with this guidance) that they have been made aware of that are affecting a pupil or pupils.

18 Operational flow chart

Child or young person reports alleged bullying incident

↓

Details of incident gathered by member of staff to whom alleged bullying is reported

↓

Incident reported to appropriate member of staff who records details on SEEMiS (if different from above)

↓

CLICK AND GO
- Application
- Management
- Bullying and equalities
- Maintain incident

↓

Continue to update incident details as investigation progresses ← **Drop down menu allows you to record ongoing incident as 'being addressed'**

↓

When fully investigated and conclusion reached, remember to 'sign off' incident.

↓

SIGN OFF INCIDENT
Drop down menu allows different sign off options:
- Unfounded
- Not resolved
- Resolved

Inverclyde council

19 Appendix A: prejudice-based bullying

This section outlines the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 as well as other characteristics which may lead to bullying that are not covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Additional support needs: These can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors, and therefore may relate to a protected characteristic. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional sup-port need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

Asylum seekers and refugees: Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and, given that race is a protected characteristic, understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

Body image and physical appearance: This can be hugely important to children and young people with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact on their wellbeing. In some cases, body image and physical appearance may relate to a protected characteristic, such as race or disability.

Disability: Disability is a protected characteristic. People who bully others may see disabled children and young people as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The language and behaviour used may be a result of a lack of understanding about the nature of a person's disability. Increased knowledge and understanding about disability and the impact it can have can help reduce bullying.

Gender identity and transphobic bullying: The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term for those whose gender identity or expression differs in some way from the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, neither or aspects of both. Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic. Transgender people face significant societal prejudice largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways including transphobic name calling or deliberately misgendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying if someone is perceived to be transgender or someone they are associate with, is transgender, i.e a parent, relative or other significant figure.

This can manifest in many ways including transphobic name calling or deliberately misgendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying if someone is perceived to be transgender or someone they are associate with, is transgender, i.e a parent, relative or other significant figure.

The term 'gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 and refers to those who propose to go through, are going through, or have gone through a process of gender re-assignment.

Looked after children and young people: Looked after children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour. Children can face bullying for being perceived to be different.

Inverclyde council

Racism and race: Race is a protected characteristic. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture as well as their skin colour and accent. The status of the ethnic group a child belongs to (or people assume they belong to) in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

Religion or belief: Religion or belief is a protected characteristic. Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths 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 lead to bullying. People who have a religion or belief as well as those who do not, are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Sectarianism: Most people understandably associate sectarianism with religion, which is a protected characteristic. 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 for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be. In Scotland, sectarianism is most often related to Protestant and Roman Catholic divisions within Christianity but can also relate to other religions, for example Sunni and Shia Muslims within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform Jews within Judaism.

Sexism and gender: Sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are all protected characteristics. Bullying in the form of derogatory language 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. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are perceived not to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying. Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can lead to bullying because of the prejudice towards their perceived difference.

Socio-economc prejudice: Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived 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, accents, belongings, clothing, etc can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant socioeconomic group. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

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.

Inverclyde council

20 References

Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016), The Scottish Government, Edinburgh.
https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2016/09/enhancing-learning-teaching-through-use-digital-technology/documents/00505855-pdf/00505855-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00505855.pdf

Every Childhood is Worth Fighting For, (2019), National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Inspection of Inverclyde Council Education Authority (2018), Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education, Livingston.

Legislation.gov.uk. (2010). Equality Act 2010. [online] Available at:
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents [Accessed 11 Jan. 2015].

Positive Relationships Positive Behaviour (2019—revised edition), Inverclyde Council.

Respect for All: Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017) The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh.

Sexting and Young People (2019) National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children online:
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/

United Nations Children's Fund UK. (1989). The United Nations convention on the rights of the child.
https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.132565838.1346040295.1506589611-2116587686.1506589611

Footnote

The term 'parent' is used throughout this document. Please note that this term is generic in nature and may also refer to 'carers.'