

Lawthorn Primary School & Early Years Centre

Anti-Bullying Policy



August 2023

North Ayrshire Council is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments and to the promotion of positive social relationships and behaviours. Bullying behaviour in whatever form is unacceptable and must be actively challenged.

As an authority, through our policies and actions we will encourage and promote positive relationships; respect for each other; valuing each other and celebrating our differences. North Ayrshire Council's stance is that bullying behaviour of any kind is never acceptable.

North Ayrshire's policy is designed to

- Reduce, prevent and respond effectively to bullying behaviour.
- Provide a clear and consistent approach to managing incidents of bullying behaviour across all our establishments.
- Ensure that any bullying approaches are fully embedded in practice, ensuring fairness, respect, equality and inclusion.

Creating an environment at Lawthorn Primary School where bullying cannot thrive

We create this environment through our values and ensuring they are at the heart of all the work we do in the school.

We will provide excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed.

Our School values are

KINDNESS

HONESTY

RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

We aim to:

- To provide a high-quality learning environment which promotes excellence and equity and enables our children to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
- To celebrate the talents and achievements of all children to enable them to achieve their full potential
- To work in partnership with parents, carers and our whole school community to maintain a positive school community, where everyone is respected, included and nurtured.
- To promote empowerment, leadership and collaboration at all levels

Positive Relationships

The school is committed to developing a nurturing approach and promoting positive relationships. Like every community, our school is built on the relationships within it, across it and its connections with others. Every member of staff is responsible for establishing and maintaining positive relationships with each other, with parents and with partners and most importantly with the young people in their care.

Our expectations of behaviour for children and young people are high. Some children may require additional support in relation to their behaviour, and the school will work positively with the young person and the parents, and other partners, as appropriate, to ensure positive outcomes are achieved.

North Ayrshire Council is committed to the principles of restorative practices. This is a solution-focused approach to managing behaviour and resolving difficulties and which promotes healthy relationships that enable better behaviour and better learning.

What is bullying?

We recognise that bullying has a different kind of impact from other behaviour, it affects how children see themselves and the choices they can make. Children who are bullied feel unsafe and other people affect the things they feel they can do. At Lawthorn, we define bullying in line with the national policy 'Respect for All', as

Bullying is both behaviour and impact: the impact is on a person's ability to feel in control of themselves. It is unkind behaviour that make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.

Pupils at Lawthorn have explored this definition and agree with the above definition. Parents and carers were also consulted on this and agree with the definition.

Bullying can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. This behaviour happens face to face and online.

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance.

The Equality Act 2010 supports progress on equality, particularly in relation to nine protected characteristics, which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Prejudice-based language and behaviour will always be challenged at Lawthorn. We will challenge homophobia, we will challenge bullying based on disability, race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, religion and belief, socio economic status, appearance, if children are Looked After, are young carers or are refugees or their families are asylum seekers.

Children's Rights

Children have the right to be safe. Children's Rights sit within a document called the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNCRC. The UNCRC has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and sets out rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. This includes the right to be safe, the right to an education and to have your views taken into account.

Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. We will make sure that our anti-bullying work at Lawthorn is informed by the UNCRC and that our staff, pupils, parents and carers are aware of Children's Rights. We are a Rights Respecting School.

Responding to Bullying

If a pupil is concerned about bullying, they can approach their teacher. If they are not confident to talk to their teacher, they can approach any teacher or member of staff they feel comfortable talking to. They can tell a parent, grandparent or carer who can share this with the school.

We know that bullying is made up of both behaviour and impact, when investigating and responding to concerns about bullying, we will always look at both behaviour and impact.

Staff at Lawthorn will always ask –

What was the behaviour?

What impact did it have?

What do I need to do about it?

We will always ask children who are being bullied what they would like us to do.

We know that sometimes hurtful behaviour or words can have no impact. At Lawthorn Primary unkind behaviour, harmful or prejudiced-based language will always be challenged no matter what impact it has.

We also know that sometimes children can over react to low level behaviour. We will always support someone when they feel this way. We will help them develop ways to manage their feelings, express their views and develop ways of responding to behaviour that is unkind and mediate or problem solve where behaviour has been misunderstood.

Children value choices when responding to bullying. It is our role as adults to explore their options and to find a route that works for them. Some children will prefer to talk about how they feel, some may draw or explore it in other ways, some cope through art, drama and sports.

In the first instance the class teacher or support staff will try to respond and resolve any concerns over behaviour and impact. If they require further support they can approach the Management Team who will make a decision on how to proceed.

Children with additional support needs may experience bullying differently and may be targeted because of their additional support need. In addition, social emotional or behavioural needs which

can arise from bullying, may be considered an additional support need if the bullying is having an impact on the child or young person's learning, including those children and young people who are bullying. Staff at Lawthorn Primary will always take into account additional support needs and the principles of inclusion when addressing bullying.

What can Pupils expect at Lawthorn Primary

This reflects the consultation with pupils

Pupils can expect -

- To be treated fairly
- To be safe and to be themselves
- To be listened to and involved and asked about what is happening to them
- That bullying will never be ignored
- To be supported and helped when bullied, we will always address the impact of bullying and support children and their families to feel safe and that children who are bullied are helped to feel like themselves again.
- That staff will monitor the impact of bullying on an ongoing basis.

Children who have bullied others can expect -

- That there are consequences for bullying other pupils. These will vary in severity depending on each situation and how well they have responded to initial responses.
- We understand that all behaviour is communication. We need to help children and young people who are bullying 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 will challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour.
- In line with the feedback from parents and carers we recognise that those who are bullying should get support from both parents and the school and that bullying should be dealt with fairly and consistently.
- We will not label children wherever possible – we shall instead focus on labelling the behaviour and helping them change that.

What our pupils told us

Our pupils told us that they need to feel listened to and involved in what is happening to them. Our pupils shared the following:

'All the adults need to make sure their child is happy with what they're going to proceed with'

'Make sure you ask us what we want to happen'

'Don't just talk about behaviour, stop it'

'Do not over react, stay calm'

'Do not make a big scene about it'

'Properly listen to me'

As a result of this clear feedback from pupils, we ask all adults - school staff and parents and carers, to be mindful of how their response can help a child feel listened to, included and safe.

What can our Parents and Carers expect?

Parents and carers can notify any teacher or staff member if they are concerned about bullying. **Parents will be included and informed when there are concerns about bullying. The school will investigate these first and make a judgment on the severity of the behaviour and the impact before contacting parents or carers.**

We spoke to parents and carers as part of this policy development process. 95% of parents spoken to would expect support if their child was bullying. 95% see teaching children about relationships as a joint responsibility between the school and parents and carers.

Parents value the school's ongoing communication and feel the 'open door policy' is welcome.

Bullying behaviour can also happen online. We strongly encourage parents and carers to monitor their child's use of technology and ask them to challenge any negative usage as well as support their child if they are receiving bullying messages by ensuring social media accounts are private and have appropriate age restrictions in place.

When asked to use three words to describe the school, parents and carers said



Monitoring and Recording Bullying

All incidents of bullying will be recorded locally.

Not all disagreements between children are necessarily bullying and it is recommended that staff should consider behaviour and impact before deciding if it is bullying and whether it should be recorded.

The purpose for recording is for schools to learn about what kind of bullying is happening in their establishment and to identify if there are trends or issues which require addressing. To this end, recording is an improvement tool.

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 of the protected characteristics
- The impact of the bullying incident, including consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns and
- Actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

Training

All staff at Lawthorn Primary have had training on this approach to anti-bullying.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in three years