

Bellshill Academy



Anti-bullying Policy



Introduction

At Bellshill Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all students feel safe, valued, and respected. We firmly believe that every individual has the right to learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination. This Anti-Bullying Policy outlines our approach to tackling bullying and provides clear expectations for pupils, staff, and the wider school community.

This vision is at the heart of the curriculum, assemblies and extra-curricular activities, and in the relationships between pupils and staff. For every young person at Bellshill Academy to feel valued, we have a duty to support pupils in the development of their social, physical, emotional and mental health as, to us, this is just as important as their academic attainment. Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated within our school and will be dealt with as quickly and effectively as possible.

At Bellshill Academy we strive to ensure that each pupil is given the opportunity to thrive in line with the wellbeing 'shanarri' indicators outlined in Getting it Right for Every Child. To ensure that we support each young person's right to be Safe, Respected and Included, all staff have a responsibility to act on or report incidents of bullying.

- **Safe:** Feeling safe from harm, abuse, and neglect. It includes physical, emotional, and psychological safety.
- **Healthy:** Having good physical and mental health, and access to services that help improve both.
- **Achieving:** Reaching educational, personal, and social goals. This can include academic success, develop talents, or achieve personal milestones.
- **Nurtured:** Being cared for in a loving, supportive environment, whether that's within the family, at school, or in the community.
- **Active:** Engaging in physical activity and being encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- **Respected:** Feeling valued, listened to, and treated with respect by others, including family, peers, and professionals.
- **Responsible:** Developing a sense of responsibility for one's actions, as well as understanding and contributing positively to society.
- **Included:** Feeling included in all areas of life, such as at home, in school, and in the wider community. It also includes equal access to opportunities.

This policy is designed in line with North Lanarkshire Council's guidelines on bullying prevention and intervention and aligns with our school's core values. Our aims are to:

- ✓ Create a safe and supportive environment where all students can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.
- ✓ Ensure that all instances of bullying are addressed promptly, sensitively, and effectively.
- ✓ Promote positive relationships based on mutual respect, dignity, and inclusivity.

Core Values of Bellshill Academy

Community The importance of building a strong, supportive, and inclusive community within the school and beyond. It highlights the need for a sense of belonging, teamwork, and collective responsibility among students, staff, and families. It encourages collaboration, mutual support, and making positive contributions to the wider community.

Aspiration Having high hopes, goals, and dreams for the future. This value encourages students to strive for excellence, aim high, and push themselves to achieve their personal and academic best. It's about nurturing ambition and encouraging students to set and achieve meaningful goals.

Respect Treating others with dignity, consideration, and fairness. It's about understanding and valuing diversity, showing kindness, and being empathetic to the needs and views of others. This value promotes a culture where every individual's voice is heard and valued, and where everyone's rights and differences are respected.

Endeavour The value of persistence, determination, and resilience in the face of challenges. It encourages students to put in effort, to keep trying even when things are difficult, and to learn from setbacks. It's about a mindset of continuous improvement and striving to do one's best, regardless of obstacles.

The Rights of the Child

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** plays a crucial role in shaping the policies and practices in schools around the world. It establishes a comprehensive set of rights that ensure children's well-being, protection, and development, and emphasizes the importance of creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all children.

The key **UNCRC articles** that are relevant to anti-bullying:

Article 2 – Non-Discrimination: Children should not face discrimination regardless of their background, ethnicity, gender, abilities, or any other status.

Article 12 – Respect for the Views of the Child: Children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and to have their views given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

Article 19 – Protection from All Forms of Violence: Children should be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment, maltreatment, or exploitation.

Article 28 – Right to Education: Children have the right to education, and education should be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

Article 29 – Goals of Education: Education should develop the child's respect for human rights, their environment, and encourage them to contribute to a society based on peace, tolerance, and understanding.

Article 39 – Recovery and Reintegration: Children who have been victims of any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse should receive appropriate treatment and rehabilitation.

Definition of Bullying

What is bullying?

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 their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened, and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online. (respectme, 2015)

It can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Physical bullying:** Hitting, pushing, or any form of physical aggression.
- **Verbal bullying:** Name-calling, teasing, or making hurtful comments.
- **Social or relational bullying:** Excluding someone, spreading rumours, or manipulating friendships.
- **Cyberbullying:** Using technology (e.g. social media, text messages, or websites) to harm, harass, or humiliate others.
- **Discriminatory bullying:** Bullying based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristics.

Challenging All Types of Prejudice Bullying (Equality Act 2010)

We recognize the harmful impact that **bullying**, particularly that based on **race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics**, can have on the well-being and academic success of our students. In line with the **Equality Act 2010**, we have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of bullying or harassment. This includes bullying that stems from prejudice, discrimination, or hate towards individuals or groups based on their **race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion**, or any other protected characteristic.

Additional Support Needs, Disabilities and impairments

Children and young people with ASN, disabilities and impairments have a wide variety of needs, skills and talents. Young people with ASN may;

- Be adversely affected by negative attitudes and perceptions of difference and therefore be more isolated.
- Not understand that what is happening is defined as bullying
- Have greater difficulty telling others about incidents of bullying

Appearance or Health

Targeting and isolating children and young people;

- With visible health or medical conditions, such as eczema or acne
- Who are perceived to have a physical limitation due to size, weight or other body confidence issues

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Children and young people who have had ACEs can be vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons. They may find more challenging to develop positive and meaningful relationships with peers and adults. Examples of childhood adversity can include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Living with someone who abused drugs
- Living with someone who abused alcohol
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Living with someone who has gone to prison
- Living with someone with a serious mental illness
- Losing a parent through divorce, death or abandonment

Racism

Racism is any behavior, act, or language that discriminates against someone based on their race, ethnicity, nationality, or cultural background. This can include verbal abuse, physical violence, exclusion, or spreading stereotypes.

- Verbal Abuse: Name-calling, racial slurs, or offensive jokes targeting someone's race or ethnicity.
- Physical Bullying: Hitting, pushing, or any physical harm motivated by racism.
- Exclusion: Isolating or excluding a student based on their race or cultural background.
- Cyberbullying: Racist comments or harassment on social media, websites, or messaging platforms.
- Discrimination in Education: Racist behaviors or attitudes that prevent students from having equal access to learning opportunities or support.

LGBTQIA+

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying may include behaviour or language which makes an individual feel unsafe or marginalised because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation. It is most commonly motivated by prejudice against individuals who are, or who are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or any part of the LGBTQIA+ community. Individuals who do not fit certain stereotypes may also experience this type of bullying

Sexism and Transphobia

- Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes that may demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender.
- Sexual bullying may include name calling or comments regarding an individual's physical appearance. In addition, making inappropriate comments or innuendos, propositions and physical contact without consent.
- Transphobic bullying is behaviour or language that makes a child or young person feel judged or excluded because of their gender identity. It is often based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views and beliefs about trans people. Boys, girls, and non-binary individuals may be affected. Alongside this, individuals who are still questioning their gender identity or those who do not identify as trans but do not conform to gender stereotypes.

Bigotry

Bigotry can affect anyone. It may include young people being subject to abuse and harassment because of their race, culture, background or beliefs. This may be;

- Being called derogatory names
- Witnessing offensive graffiti
- Personal attacks including violence or assault
- Being left out, treated differently or excluded
- Inappropriate or insulting jokes

Cyberbullying

This type of bullying takes place over digital devices or online in social media apps, forums, or gaming platforms. Anywhere which allows young people to view, participate in or share content.

- It can include sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, or false content about another individual.
- It may also include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.
- Some cyberbullying behaviour may also cross into unlawful or criminal behaviour. For example, sharing inappropriate images or sexually explicit images or videos without consent.

An expansion of North Lanarkshire Council's Anti Bullying Policy can be found on our school website.

Intent, Persistence and Impact

Intent

When investigating bullying, intent can be difficult to prove. A young person may be modelling behaviour displayed by peers or adults. It is important that the young person who is perpetrating the alleged bullying is shown why their actions are wrong. Although intent may not be there, the impact of bullying can still be detrimental. It's more important to focus on the behaviour and the impact it had, rather than trying to establish whether someone acted deliberately or not.

Persistence

The issue with persistence is that the behaviour must take place more than once, but the impacts of bullying can be felt after a single incident. Although bullying is usually persistent, a single incident can have a significant impact on some children and young people by instilling a fear that it might happen again. It is important that any display of bullying behaviour is addressed, regardless of whether it is an isolated incident or not.

Impact

Bullying can affect people in different ways, and this should be taken into account. If you are unsure if behaviour is bullying, look at the effect it is having on the child or young person. We should always remember that children will tease each other, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and disagree about what they like and don't like. Although these are normal behaviours in growing up, it is important as an establishment that we educate our young people to allow them to differentiate between a difference of opinion and bullying behaviours.

Strategies used to Prevent and Respond to Bullying Incidents

The Bellshill Academy community prides itself on establishing an ethos which is nurturing and caring. The positive relationships between pupils and staff allow all children and young people to learn and excel in an environment in which they feel comfortable and safe. Pupils and staff have confidence in the school pupil support system and are aware that reporting bullying incidents will be acted upon promptly.

Through several awareness raising sessions and the schools PSHE programme, students will come to realise that they do not have to be bystanders but can play an active role in the recognition, reporting and prevention of bullying behaviour. Including;

- Procedures and guidelines – the school's anti-bullying policy can give pupils, parents and staff advice on how to identify and tackle bullying behaviours.
- Communication – it is essential that pupils feel confident enough to tell a teacher if they are experiencing bullying. Building positive relationships is key to this and is something that staff at Bellshill Academy strive to always do.
- Training and support for staff – staff undertake professional learning on how to tackle bullying in school.
- The school's Vision and Values – displayed throughout
- Anti-bullying graphics displayed in classrooms and communal areas
- The use of CCTV cameras.
- Assemblies – Regular presentations from RRS group, LGBTI+ Allies group, Community Partners
- Staff present in communal areas e.g. in corridors between periods, in social areas during breaks and lunch times
- Designated quiet areas for pupils
- Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- Peer Guidance and Mentoring

PSHE Programme

Within the PSHE curriculum, children and young people will explore the impact of bullying. This will help to:

- Raise awareness about bullying behaviour, its effect on emotional health and well-being, and how it will be combated.
- Develop personal and social skills through the promotion of friendship skills, assertiveness skills, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, communication skills, and the exploration of spiritual and moral values.
- Build and maintain self-esteem.
- Promote positive role models and positive pupil/staff relationships.

Guidance for Pupils



Expectations of Pupils:

We expect all pupils at Bellshill Academy to:

- Treat others with respect and kindness.
- Take responsibility for their actions.
- Be an upstander: report bullying and support victims.
- Report bullying incidents to staff.
- Engage in anti-bullying education and awareness activities.

For the person who is experiencing bullying;

- ✓ Staff at Bellshill Academy will listen to any pupil who is experiencing bullying. We will listen to what has happened.
- ✓ We will also help the pupil restore agency by discussing what the pupil wants to do.
- ✓ Arrange a restorative meeting between the person being bullied and the person displaying bullying-type behaviour (but only if the person being bullied wants this.)
- ✓ We will ensure communication with all parties involved.

For the person who is displaying bullying-type behaviours;

- We will work with any young person displaying bullying behaviours, to ensure that they appreciate the impact of their actions on others.
- We will contact home and involve parents/carers in discussions around bullying behaviours and seek their support in the form of parental meetings.
- If a restorative meeting is desired, this will give the opportunity to demonstrate the impact and to see the consequences of bullying behaviour and to reach a resolution.
- We will endeavour to address what is happening behind the bullying behaviour. We can support them to engage in more positive relationships and interactions.

Reporting Bullying: Pupils should report bullying to a teacher, pastoral care staff, senior staff, or by scanning the QR code displayed around the school. Reports can be made in person, via email, or online. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school if they are concerned.

Guidance for Staff

Every member of staff at Bellshill Academy has a responsibility to ensure our young people feel safe and included. Relationships are a huge part of this, and both teaching and non-teaching staff strive to maintain positive relationships with pupils as they interact with them within and out of the classroom. On top of this, different members of staff have different roles in tackling bullying behaviours in school.

Investigation: Staff will investigate promptly, ensuring safety and fairness. Interviews will be carried out with those involved.

Support for Victims: Victims will be offered support, including counselling, mentoring, and regular check-ins.

Consequences: Consequences will follow the school's Behaviour Management Policy and may include warnings, detention, restorative practices, or suspension. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect, apologise, and take part in behaviour interventions.

Prevention and Education: Anti-bullying education will be delivered through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies, workshops, curriculum work, and awareness days.

All staff members at Bellshill Academy are expected to:

- Model positive behaviour.
- Respond appropriately to bullying incidents.
- Support pupils (both victims and perpetrators).
- Create a safe classroom environment.
- Engage in regular professional development on bullying prevention.
- Follow the correct procedures for Reporting and Dealing with Bullying

Classroom Teachers and Support Staff

Classroom teachers should challenge any incidents of bullying behaviour that they witness in their classes as soon as they occur. If a teacher suspects that an incident could be part of a wider pattern of behaviour, or notices changes in a young person's behaviour or demeanour that they suspect could be because of bullying, they should pass this on to the pupil's Pupil Support Teacher.

Principal Teachers of Pupil Support

Harris House	Iona House	Arran House	Lewis House
Miss Cahill	Mr Clark	Miss Maguire	Miss Fleming

Principal Teachers (PTs) of Pupil Support have pastoral responsibility for the pupils in their care. They will act on any reports of bullying, from pupils, staff or parents. They will speak with the pupil experiencing bullying and the pupil(s) displaying the behaviour to establish exactly what has happened and to facilitate a restorative meeting of both parties, if desired by the pupil experiencing bullying. If this does not stop the behaviour, PT Pupil Support will liaise with members of the Senior Leadership Team to decide upon the next steps.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

SLT will be kept fully informed of cases of bullying and where bullying does not stop after interventions made by class teachers and PT Pupil Support, SLT will speak to the pupil displaying bullying behaviours. Where appropriate, SLT will also decide upon natural consequences taken. When it is established that an incident of bullying has occurred, this will be officially recorded on SEEMiS' Bullying and Equalities Module.

Guidance for Parents & Carers

- ✓ Reassure your child they have done the right thing by disclosing this information to you.
- ✓ Encourage your child to report incidents of bullying to their PT Pupil support or a trusted adult.
- ✓ If you have any concerns about the child's emotional wellbeing contact GP in the first instance and alert the school
- ✓ Report any incidents of bullying behaviour to PT Pupil Support in the first instance
- ✓ To allow the school to deal with issues effectively, parents must allow the school to conduct enquiries and should not attempt to try to resolve the issue themselves, for example, via social media.
- ✓ Regularly contact the school with any updates/ issues regarding bullying.
- ✓ Once investigated, PT Pupil Support will contact parents via telephone to discuss the next steps.

Conclusion

This Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed through a collaborative process involving **pupils, parents and carers, staff and external body Respectme.org**. We believe that by working together as a community, we can create an environment that not only prevents bullying but also actively promotes the **well-being and positive development** of every individual at Bellshill Academy.

Additional Resources and Support

- childline.org.uk – contains tips and resources for victims
- bullying.co.uk – help and advice for victims, carers and schools
- nspcc.org.uk – help and advice for carers and families
- <https://respectme.org.uk/> - help and advice for pupils, staff and carers.
- <https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/>
- <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/groups-and-support/lgbt-advice-centre/>
- <https://young.scot/get-informed/being-bullied-what-are-your-options/>
- <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/additional-support/specific-support-needs/social-and-emotional-factors/experiencing-bullying-behaviour/>

Monitoring and Review

This Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness.

Feedback from pupils, staff, and parents will inform us of improvements.