

Ravenswood Primary School's

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated 2020



## 1. Rationale

Ravenswood Primary School has created this policy in accordance with the Scottish Government policy A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Children and Young People (2010), the North Lanarkshire Council policy Bullying: It's Never Acceptable (2012) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1992).

As part of "Getting It Right for Every Child", we deploy our Anti-Bullying strategy in order to ensure the wellbeing of every child in our care, especially in relation to their safety and inclusion. As a Rights-Respecting School, we aim for all our pupils to understand our Anti-Bullying message in the context of respect for each other's rights under the UNCRC.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Positive Relationships Policy, which lays out the procedures the school employs in order to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour.

This policy will outline a shared definition and understanding of Bullying; the processes for reporting, investigating and recording of bullying behaviour; and the staged intervention approach that the school will follow in its response to allegations of bullying.

## 2. Definition of Bullying

*Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this their sense of 'agency'.*

(<http://respectme.org.uk/bullying>) April 2019

Intent is not required in order to confirm an incident as bullying, as in some circumstances a child may not be aware that their behaviour is bullying. The focus is on the impact the behaviour has had, rather than whether or not the person acted deliberately to cause harm. Bullying does not have to be persistent in order to have an impact on a child's wellbeing. A single incident can have an effect on mental health, confidence, and self-esteem.

Bullying can affect children in different ways. Ravenswood Primary School will take account of the effect this may be having on an individual child in order to reduce the impact and restore the child's ability to cope with the feelings they are having.

## 3. When it's Not Bullying

Children will inevitably fall out and disagree as they learn how to form and maintain respectful relationships. It is important that children learn how to manage conflict as positively as possible, as this helps them to learn about co-operation and develops their resilience. In such cases, the school can be a source of support for children in repairing relationships. This would be managed by involving children in conversations with a supportive adult. It is important to be mindful that if such behaviour is left unchecked, it can lead to bullying. Disagreements can lead to bullying behaviour where the balance of power in the relationship is unequal, for example an older child to a much younger child, or a group of children falling out with or excluding one child.

#### 4. Prejudice Based Bullying

Bullying behaviour can be a result of prejudices relating to actual or perceived differences. The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal to discriminate against people based on characteristics including:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

Our school aims to create an environment where diversity is celebrated. Any behaviour demonstrating discrimination based on any of the above characteristics is deemed unacceptable. This becomes criminal harassment, rather than bullying, and such cases could be referred to our Community Police Officer to determine the best course of action.

In a digital age, bullying behaviour can also take place online. This will normally take place outside of school, where children have access to social media. This behaviour may still be reported at school and the management team would refer the matter to the children's parents. The school would strongly advise that parents adhere to the minimum age guidelines on social media use. More guidance on this can be found at [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk).

Ravenswood Primary School will support children, as appropriate, through the Health & Wellbeing Curriculum.

#### 5. Reporting of Bullying Behaviour

Our school aims to create an environment in which all children feel safe in reporting bullying behaviour and understand how to report what they have seen. Children must also be taught what to report, how, when and to whom.

##### □ What?

A clear definition of bullying is shared with children.

##### □ How?

Children know that they can approach a member of staff, or a trusted adult outside of school, in order to report bullying.

#### □ When?

An important part of the message for children is that they should not wait to see whether things get better. They are encouraged to report instances of bullying behaviour as soon as possible after it occurs.

#### □ Who?

Children know that they can report bullying to any member of school staff. This will be considered against the definition of bullying and passed to Senior Leadership Team as appropriate.

### 6. Investigation of Bullying Allegations

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) take responsibility for investigating allegations of bullying promptly. This will involve taking testimonies from all children involved or who may have witnessed the incident.

Our school has an investigation template to ensure information is gathered thoroughly and consistently and a record of the incident is created.

If the incident is substantiated as bullying, the school will follow the stages of intervention outlined below.

### 7. School Response to Bullying

In Ravenswood Primary, we recognise that all behaviour is communication.

Following investigation, Ravenswood Primary School will respond to substantiated incidents of bullying using a staged intervention approach. In all cases, a balance will be struck between supportive actions and consequences as deemed appropriate. At each stage, the school will make reference to the rights of all children under the UNCRC.

#### Stage 1

- Make clear that the type of behaviour being exhibited is totally unacceptable.
- Work with the person displaying bullying behaviour to make them aware of the impact of their actions on others and support them in making positive choices to minimise the risk of recurrence.
- Offer the opportunity for both children to attend a meeting with a member of the SLT, where they can suggest their own solutions to resolve conflict or improve relationships.
- Continue to monitor and support the person being bullied to assess the impact on their emotional wellbeing.

- Inform parents of the incident and any action taken in supporting their own child, seeking to work in partnership to prevent a recurrence of the bullying behaviours.
- Utilise school-based nurturing approaches to support the children where appropriate e.g. engaging children in conversations to help identify any possible motivations or triggers for the behaviour.

### Stage 2

For more severe incidents involving physical violence or for incidents that have recurred, despite Stage 1 support strategies being employed.

- Any actions from Stage 1 that may not yet have been taken.
- Regular communication with parents.
- Suggested attendance at lunchtime drop-in nurture group.
- Involvement of other agencies as appropriate, for example Educational Psychology.
- Solution-focused meeting with school staff, pupil, parents and Community Police Officer. □ Specific targets created to help modify behaviour.

### Stage 3

In extreme cases such as physical attacks and ongoing harassment, a young person showing bullying behaviour may be excluded from school. Stage 1 and Stage 2 strategies may still apply upon their return to school in order to support the pupil and prevent a recurrence.

## 8. Recording of bullying

Allegations of bullying are recorded on SEEMIS, (North Lanarkshire Council's online Education Management Information System) in accordance with local authority guidelines. Incidents are to be recorded within three days of the investigation being completed. The SLT will also record actions taken and any opinions expressed by the parents.

Where other agencies are involved, this will mean sharing of information about the incident. Information is shared in compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

## 9. Involvement of Parents

Parents have a key role to play in supporting their children when they have experienced bullying or have displayed bullying behaviour towards other children. At Ravenswood Primary School we aim to involve parents in our Anti-Bullying strategy. Parents will be informed at the earliest stage of a bullying investigation.

Any meetings between parents and the School Leadership Team are conducted with complete confidentiality and we will never discuss personal information about a child with other parents.

Parents can access information and advice at [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk) .

#### 10. Complaints or Comments

We welcome feedback from parents. If you are not satisfied with the way in which an allegation of bullying has been dealt with by the school, please raise this in the first instance with the Head Teacher. Your concern will be investigated and you will be informed of the action (if any) that is to be taken within 28 days; our aim is to pass on information within 5 working days.

If you are unhappy with action taken by the school you may choose to direct your concern to NLC Education and Families.

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