

TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL RENFREW

Anti-Bullying Policy: Trinity CARES for all.



Achieving Excellence Together



Trinity CARES for all.

Our school offers a safe base!

Renfrewshire Council believes that a safe, nurturing and respectful learning environment is fundamental in supporting every child to thrive and achieve. The Council recognises the impact that bullying behaviour can have on wellbeing and is committed to preventing, reducing and responding to bullying behaviour in all forms in our establishments.

Renfrewshire Council's Antibullying Policy, August 2018

Trinity High School Vision:

We want all of our young people to feel that they belong here at Trinity High School. This means that they must be made to feel valued and respected by all others within the school community. As well as the academic learning they will undertake, we hope that — in their time at Trinity High School — young people will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Unfortunately, there may be occasions where relationships are less positive, and some young people experience bullying behaviours. We are fully committed to addressing bullying behaviour as swiftly and effectively as possible, so that young people need not feel its harmful effects. Bullying behaviour — in any of its forms — is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

Policy Context:

Trinity High School's Anti-Bullying Policy is informed by a range of other policies and guidance frameworks at local, national and international level. Links to these are provided in the *References & Useful Links* section at the end of this document.

Our approach is given structure and direction by Renfrewshire Council's Anti-Bullying Policy, published in August 2018, which makes clear the roles and responsibilities of staff, young people, parents and carers have in identifying and eradicating bullying behaviours. It also details appropriate processes for addressing and recording any instances of bullying behaviour.



Unicef works with schools in the UK to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive. The Rights Respecting Schools Award embeds these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens. **Trinity High School is proud to call itself a Rights Respecting School.**¹



GIRFEC is central to all government policies which support children, young people and their families and is delivered through services and people who work with families. The GIRFEC approach is based on values and principles which support children's and parents' rights. It was developed by people who work with children and young people and reflects feedback from families. Trinity High School keeps the GIRFEC approach central to assessing and supporting the wellbeing of all children and young people.²



In a nurturing school staff know about the impact of early relationships and have an understanding that children come to school with different social skills and abilities to understand and regulate their emotions. Staff understand the need to differentiate and teach these skills as well as academic skills. They develop practices which embed the six Nurture Principles outlined below and

which support wellbeing and resilience in children and young people. Nurturing relationships remain crucial when a child comes to school and throughout their time in school and is a whole school approach. Trinity High School is committed to encouraging and developing nurturing relationships and practices in everything we do and in every area of our school.³

Education Scotland's **How Good is our School 4**⁴ is a self-evaluation resource which allows schools – across the breadth of their provision – to identify areas of strength and areas for development. Quality indicator 3.1 (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion) has the most specific relevance to anti-bullying practice.

Education Scotland's **How Good is OUR School**⁵ is a toolkit designed to facilitate the participation of young people in self-evaluation activities which inform school improvement. Themes 1 and 4 (Our Relationships and Our Health and Wellbeing) explore issues in relation to equality and inclusion, so are significant to discussions around bullying.

What is Bullying?

At Trinity High School, we use the definition of bullying provided by Respect Me:

Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on the other person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this 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 and it can happen face to face and online.

Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour might not be repeated, the threat that it might can be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. This behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face and/or online
- · 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
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online)

https://respectme.org.uk/bullying/what-is-bullying/

Some young people may experience bullying behaviours due to prejudices. It is important that – through recording incidents of bullying behaviour fully and accurately – we are able to identify any patterns of prejudice-based bullying, so that the attitudes behind such behaviours can be challenged through education. The **Equality Act 2010**⁶ act sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination related to any of the nine protected characteristics:

- 1. Age
- 2. Disability
- 3. Race
- 4. Sex (Gender)
- 5. Pregnancy/Maternity
- 6. Religion/Belief
- 7. Sexual Orientation
- 8. Marriage/Civil Partnership
- 9. Gender Reassignment

Trinity High School's '**ONE Trinity'**⁷ policy specifically outlines our approach to promotion of equality, including: Equal Opportunities, Anti-Discrimination and Celebrating Diversity.

How does this Policy reflect our School's Vision, Values, aims and our Rights Respecting Schools Charter?



We promote the core values of **Community, Achievement, Respect and Equality** among our pupils, staff, parents, partner agencies and the local community. We believe that it is only by working together that our school can **ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE TOGETHER.**

We continue as a school in our commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)⁸ and in session 2022-23 developed our school's Rights Charter⁹ in partnership with the young people which can be viewed in full on our school website. The UNCRC rights which the young people felt were most relevant to our school's values were as follows:



Article 19 (The Right to Protection from Violence/Abuse/Neglect) is particularly relevant to our anti-bullying stance. This article reflects our commitment to ensuring that members of our school community – regardless of their background or circumstances – feel that they belong here and will be respected. We celebrate and are proud of our diversity, and will not accept prejudice, discrimination or bigotry. Every young person has the right to live within a safe and supportive environment at home, school and in the local community, so that their growth as learners an as people is unaffected by any potential negative influences. This is a matter of equity, as we must respect the rights of everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, to a comfortable life.

How do we proactively promote an inclusive ethos which safeguards young people against bullying?

We strive to ensure that our school is an inclusive environment where all members of our school community feel that they belong and are welcome.

From the beginning of their time at Trinity High School, we want our young people to know - through an effective S1 Transition programme - that they are valued and are welcome in our caring school community. As part of our Transition programme, we arrange for our young people have the chance to develop relationships with pupils outwith their classes through team building activities, along with the key staff and Senior Buddies who will support them throughout their journey at Trinity High School.

Our PSE curriculum at all stages creates opportunities for young people to develop attitudes and skills which promote positive peer group relationships. These messages are reinforced through Year Group Assemblies, and during year group seminars and Values Days when we take time to reflect on the importance of recognising and realising everyone's rights to be treated with dignity and respect.

At social times, such as intervals and lunch, the Senior Leadership Team and other colleagues have a visible profile around the school and its surrounding areas, so that they can ensure that any relationship difficulties or inappropriate behaviour amongst young people can be identified and addressed. There is a large number and variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs within the school, giving young people the opportunity to meet and form relationships with others, limiting the potential for feelings of social isolation or vulnerability.

Our Student Senior Leadership Team and trained Senior Buddies also support staff in supervising social areas at intervals and lunch so that young pupils can swiftly and easily make contact with a trusted peer, should they require to do so. A sizeable volunteer group of our Senior Pupils are trained as Mentors in Violence Prevention, and pass on their learning to younger pupils through PSE input, emphasising that all of us have responsibility for making our school a safe and inclusive space.





It provides opportunities for young people to explore healthy relationships and is an important tool in supporting wellbeing and positive mental health.

Humza Yousaf Cabinet Secretary for Justice

How do we ensure that bullying behaviours are identified and addressed as swiftly and effectively as possible?

All staff are aware of the Respect Me definition of bullying; they are encouraged to be vigilant and report any concerns regarding bullying either by making contact with the relevant Pastoral Care Teacher or Year Group DHT, or using the Seemis referral system, so that the appropriate member(s) of the Pastoral Care Team and/or Senior Leadership team are made aware.

Young people are encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour either directly to a member of staff, or via a Senior Buddy/MVP Mentor. Pupils can also discreetly arrange to speak with a member of the Pupil Support or Senior Leadership Team via a Microsoft Form using the QR codes displayed on our 'Every Child Deserves a Champion' Display in the Pastoral Corridor and displayed throughout the school. Pupils and parents have also been encouraged to download the 'Keep Safe Scotland' App. to their mobile phones which provides another means of reporting incidents of bullying directly to the school and signposts pupils and parents/carers to a variety of supports.

Where conflict emerges between young people, or where it is apparent that the behaviour of a young person is causing others to feel hurt, threatened or frightened, the relevant Principal Teacher(s) of Pastoral Care and Senior Leaders will engage in active dialogue in order to establish whether bullying has taken place, using the Respect Me definition of bullying as a basis for discussion. This dialogue should allow for a degree of moderation, and therefore ensure a consistency of approach in identifying and recording bullying incidents.

It may be necessary, in a proportionate and discreet way, to make some other members of staff aware of a bullying incident in the early stages of investigation, so that these colleagues can support the initial response to resolving the matter. For instance, if the young people involved sit close to one another in class, it may be necessary to ask the class teacher to restructure the seating plan for the short term.

All bullying incidents will be recorded using the Seemis Bullying and Equalities module by either the relevant Principal Teacher of Pastoral Care or the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.

There are two layers of quality assurance which ensure that entries within the Seemis Bullying and Equalities module are being logged as required, are being entered onto the system in a consistent and timeous way, and that the response to incidents of bullying is consistently solution-focused, consistent, and effective.

- 1) The DHT Pupil Support meets on a weekly basis with all Principal Teachers of Pastoral Care, and any recently-logged incidents within their House Group caseloads are discussed. This discussion will also ensure that:
 - At an appropriate stage following the incident, the matter has been reviewed with the young people involved, and that this review has been logged on the Seemis Bullying and Equalities module;
 - If this review suggests that those involved are not content that the matter is resolved, further planning discussions on appropriate supports have taken

place with the young people, their families, the relevant Year Group DHT, etc.

- As required, any further context can be made known to the relevant colleagues through an entry on Seemis Pastoral Notes.
- 2) Bullying is a standing item on the Senior Leadership Team Meeting agenda on a fortnightly basis. Incidents which have been recently logged on the Seemis Bullying and Equalities module are scrutinised, allowing regular and solution-focussed self-evaluation to take place; a strategic approach to preventing further instances of bullying can subsequently be developed.

Patterns across the range of logged bullying incidents can be identified and discussed. Such patterns may include:

- Individual pupils' repeated involvement;
- Year Groups involved;
- Time of day/day of week;
- Locations;
- Types of bullying behaviour (e.g. physical, emotional, exclusionary, cyberbullying, etc.);
- Bullying behaviours related to particular protected characteristics.

Strategies to address any apparent patterns can be agreed upon and actioned. These may include:

- Additional PSE or Year Group Assembly Input (perhaps involving partner agencies, such as the Community Police Officer) if specific types of bullying are becoming more prevalent, or if particular themes are being consistently observed;
- Additional supervision in specific areas of the school (either through staff, MVP mentors or the Student Senior Leadership Team) where bullying behaviours are thought to be more common;
- Professional development activities for staff if unexpected or particularly complex issues are identified.

How Do We Address Instances of Bullying Behaviour?

It is important that we apply a consistent and coherent repose when addressing instances of bullying behaviour. This means that each incident will be dealt with according to the same principles. It also means that the specific actions taken may differ slightly, bearing in mind the specific circumstances in each individual case.

- The young person experiencing and reporting bullying behaviour will be made to feel safe and well-supported initially and throughout the process.
- The incident will be fully investigated so that the circumstances are understood, and that our response is as fair as possible.

- It will be made clear to all involved in displaying bullying behaviours that these do not reflect our school values, and are unacceptable.
- The young person displaying the bullying behaviour will receive the required supports to ensure that their behaviour changes.
- We will involve, where it is appropriate to do so, those who may help us to support both the young person experiencing and the young person displaying the bullying behaviours (e.g. parents, carers, partner agencies, other pupils, etc.).
- We will ensure that throughout the process we record our findings using the Seemis Bullying and Equalities module (and Pastoral Notes, where required).
- A swift and lasting resolution will be sought as the outcome.

Supporting A Young Person Experiencing Bullying Behaviour:

An inclusive ethos is vital, if young people experiencing bullying behaviour are to feel comfortable reporting this behaviour, in the expectation that staff will listen, take their concerns seriously, and begin the process which will lead to a positive outcome.

The professional judgement of staff will be important where they notice signs that may indicate a young person is experiencing bullying behaviour, or where a young person reports an incident of bullying to them.

Respect Me recommend that staff ask the following four questions:

- 1. What was the behaviour?
- 2. What impact did it have?
- 3. What does the child or young person want to happen?
- 4. What do I need to do about it?

https://respectme.org.uk/anti-bullying-practice/ways-to-respond/

A young person experiencing bullying will usually feel a loss of agency or control; it is important, therefore, that they feel able to take back a sense of agency or control as the matter is addressed. Where possible, a member of staff should make the young person aware of what they intend to do with the information the young person has given, and keep them regularly updated on progress.

On most occasions, it will be necessary for parents to be informed of the matter, if the young person has not already made them aware; this ensures that the school can work in partnership with parents towards a resolution. Parents/carers may work in partnership with the school to resolve the matter by:

- Informing the school of bullying behaviour at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter;
- In the event of cyber-bullying, managing their children's use of electronic devices, mobile technologies and social media, including setting parental controls, ensuring privacy settings are in place and adhering to age guidelines;

- In the event of cyber-bullying, reporting any abuse to website providers, delete nasty or offensive messages and ensure their children unfriend or block persons potentially perpetrating abuse;
- Being aware of the type of incidents which may have to be reported to the police –
 retain any evidence which may include screenshots, messages, images etc;
- Understanding that we seek to understand the experiences, and address the needs
 of all children and young people, who experience bullying behaviour as well as those
 who present bullying behaviour, within a framework of respect, responsibility,
 resolution and support.

On some occasions, it may be the young person's wish that parents are not informed for a specific reason; if, following discussion between the relevant Pastoral Care Teacher and member of the Senior Leadership Team it is agreed that a decision not to inform parents is appropriate, the decision not to inform parents should be recorded in Seemis Pastoral Notes. The best interests of the child, and their safety and wellbeing should be considerations in this decision-making.

Supporting A Young Person Displaying Bullying Behaviour:

As well as clarifying the facts, and emphasising that bullying behaviours are not reflective of the school's values, and are therefore unacceptable, the initial investigation of a bullying incident will involve asking the young person responsible why they are choosing to display bullying behaviours. Nurture Principles would suggest that "all behaviour is communication", so it may well be that the bullying behaviour displayed by a young person stems from an unmet need. There are many reasons why young people display bullying behaviour towards others.

- A young person may feel powerless in some other aspect of their lives (indeed, they may have been bullied themselves); therefore, they may display bullying behaviours as a means to feel more secure by asserting power over others.
- A young person may regularly witness or experience bullying behaviours at home or in other areas of their life; therefore, they may not understand that such actions are inappropriate and unacceptable.
- A young person may find it difficult to empathise with or understand the consequences of their actions for others; therefore, they may not understand that their behaviour is experienced as bullying by others.
- A young person may be experiencing emotional difficulties; therefore, they may be displaying bullying behaviours as a symptom of the unhappiness they are feeling.
- A young person may perceive that others displaying bullying behaviours achieve a superior social status amongst their peers by doing so; therefore, they may display bullying behaviours as a means to achieve the same social status.
- A young person, for a variety of reasons, may have developed prejudicial attitudes; therefore they may display bullying behaviours which reflect these prejudicial attitudes.

Seeking to understand the reason for a young person displaying bullying behaviours should not be misunderstood as condoning it, or as minimising the feelings of hurt or fear felt by the young person experiencing the bullying behaviour.

It is often the case that a more lasting resolution can be reached if the specific reason(s) for a young person displaying bullying behaviour can be identified and understood; the most effective strategies used to improve matters are likely to be those which address these specific reason(s) in each case. For instance, if it is felt that the young person displaying bullying behaviours is doing so due to emotional difficulties they are experiencing in their own lives, they may, as part of a wider package of responses and supports, be encouraged to see a School Exchange Counsellor.

The parents/carer of the young person will be involved at an early stage, in order to ensure that they are aware of the matter, and can therefore support the school in ensuring that the matter is resolved as swiftly and effectively as possible. If the incident involves behaviour outwith the school day or at weekends, the parent will be asked to do what they can in order to encourage better choices and limit the potential for further or escalating conflict within the community or online. In the event of cyber-bullying, parents should (where necessary) seek to manage their children's use of electronic devices, mobile technologies and social media, including setting parental controls, ensuring privacy settings are in place and adhering to age guidelines.

The strategies used to address bullying behaviour may vary, according to the circumstances of each individual case; it is important that they are proportionate and lead towards a lasting and effective resolution. A key aspect of the process will involve educating the young person responsible; the impact of their actions on those who have experienced their bullying behaviour will be fully explored, so that its consequences are fully understood, and that they are better able to empathise with others.

In some cases, it may be helpful for a restorative meeting - led by a suitably trained member of staff - to take place between the young person displaying and the young person experiencing bullying behaviours. This may be an appropriate response:

- where it allows the young person experiencing the bullying behaviours to feel a greater sense of agency, and no longer feel powerless in addressing the behaviours which have made them feel hurt, threatened or frightened;
- where it encourages the young person displaying the bullying behaviour to feel greater empathy, and better understand the consequences of their behaviour;
- where both young people would feel it beneficial to agree on tangible ways in which their relationship can be improved moving forward;
- where the young person displaying the bullying behaviour wishes to express remorse for their actions, and give assurances about their behaviour in the future.

In some cases, a restorative meeting may be inappropriate, particularly if it is likely to cause distress to either or any of the participants.

A regular check-in with the appropriate Pastoral Care Teacher would be scheduled in the weeks following the incident, in order to ensure that concerns are not re-emerging, and that relationships have improved.

Depending on the specific circumstances of the bullying incident, it may be necessary for the young person displaying bullying behaviours to be removed from particular classes for a short spell of time, so that conflict is de-escalated whilst the matter is investigated by the appropriate member(s) of staff. This would be short-term and planned intervention, meaning that the young person removed from class would work in another area, supervised by a member of staff. This would only be an appropriate response if the young people experiencing and displaying bullying behaviours were in the same class; it should not be viewed as merely a punishment or sanction, and instead creates time and space for restorative and education-based solutions to take place.

It may be that, again depending on the specific circumstances, alternative arrangements for arriving at school, intervals, lunchtimes, and leaving the school premises are required in the short term to ensure that, in the immediate aftermath of an incident, the young person experiencing bullying behaviours can feel reassured that their contact with the young person responsible will be limited, until a more lasting resolution can be reached. For instance, the young person displaying bullying behaviours may be instructed to spend intervals and lunchtimes in spaces which are supervised by staff. Again, this should not be viewed as merely a punishment or sanction; instead, it creates opportunities for de-escalation, and allows time for restorative and education-based solutions to successfully take place.

In some cases, a firmer response involving consequences or sanctions is required, in order to ensure that the young person displaying bullying behaviours clearly understands that their behaviour is unacceptable. For instance, they may have privileges (e.g. permission to participate in school clubs) withdrawn for a period of time.

In some particularly serious cases, and where no other option is felt by the Headteacher to be appropriate, temporary exclusion from school may be used. However, exclusion cannot and must not be viewed as a solution to bullying; the required work (detailed above) aimed at educating young people displaying bullying behaviours, ensuring that their behaviours are modified, and developing more positive relationships will be even more important on an excluded young person's return to school.

References and Useful Links

The following resources have been used in drafting this policy.

• Renfrewshire Council Anti-Bullying Policy 2018

https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/2043/Anti-Bullying-Policy/pdf/Anti Bullying Policy2.pdf?m=1535032176043#:~:text=2.3%20Children%20and%20young%20people,concerns%20about%20themselves%20or%20others

• Respect Me Website

https://respectme.org.uk/

- Scottish Government's Getting it Right For Every Child Policy https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/
- ⁶Equality Act 2010

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010guidance#:~:text=Equality%20Act%20provisions%20which%20came,work%2C%20edu cation%2C%20associations%20and%20transport

- *BUINICEF's The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Summary)
 https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf
- ⁴How Good is our School 4
 https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4
- ⁵How Good is OUR School? Part 2
 https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/HGIOURS-Part2.pdf

The following links may be helpful for young people, parents/carers and staff.

- I Am Me, Scotland https://iammescotland.co.uk/
- Time For Inclusive Education <u>www.tie.scot</u>
- Childline

https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/

 SAMH (Scotland's Mental Health Charity) www.samh.org.uk

 Zero Tolerance (Organisation raising awareness of male violence against women/children)

www.zerotolerance.org.uk

- Enquire (Scottish advice centre for pupils with additional support needs)
 www.enquire.org.uk
- Enable (Charity campaigning for adults and children with learning disabilities)
 www.enable.org.uk
- Show Racism the Red Card www.theredcardscotland.org
- Keep Safe Scotland App.

For iphone: https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/keep-safe-scotland/id1036859060
For Android:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.isai.iamme.droid.iamme&hl=en GB&gl=US&pli=1

The importance of nurturing positive relationships for the development of wellbeing for ALL in our school community is at the heart of our policy.

¹Link to RRSA Action Plan

²Link to My World Triangle/SHANARRI Wellbeing web

³Link to RNRA Action Plan

⁷Link to ONE Trinity Inclusion & Equality Policy

⁹Link to Trinity Rights Charter