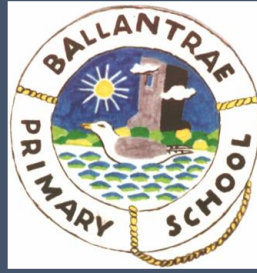


Ballantrae Primary  
School and Early Years



# Anti-Bullying Policy

November 2024

Templeton2, Yvonne

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# Ballantrae Primary School and Early Years

Ballantrae Primary School and Early Years is Rights Respecting School. We work together to learn about and respect children's rights both locally, nationally, and globally.

Bullying is a violation of children's rights and contravenes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, now enacted in Scot's Law.

Our Anti Bullying Policy reflects the following articles form the UNCRC:

Article 1: Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights of the convention.

Article 2: The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion or abilities whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3: The best interest of the child must be of top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 4: We must do all we can to make sure every child can access their rights.

Article 6: We should ensure that all children should survive and develop healthily.

Article 12: Every child as the right to have a say in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 13: Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel unless it harms other people.

Article 14: Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions, and religion but this should not stop others from enjoying their rights.

Article 16: Children have the right to privacy.

Article 19: Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated physically or mentally. They must be kept safe from harm, and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.

Article 23: Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support so they can live full and independent lives.

Article 28: All children have the right to a primary education. Discipline in school should respect children's dignity.

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talent and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment.

Article 37: No one is allowed to punish children in a cruel or harmful way.

During Anti-Bullying week November 2024, children, parents and staff reviewed the following policy and amendments were made after consultation.

# Anti-Bullying Policy

“ Bullying is face to face and /online behaviour which impacts on a person’s sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in.”

“The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional, or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.”

*Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People. November 2024*

## **Rationale**

Ballantrae Primary School and Early Years are committed to providing a positive, safe, and supportive environment for all members of the school community. Central to the work of our school is the commitment to all to promote an ethos and culture which develops positive, respectful relationships between children and adults and each other.

All children in school can be expected to be treated fairly and be actively listened to when they are concerned about their own feelings and behaviour and that of others towards them. In order to create this ethos in our Primary school and Early Years, children, staff and parents can be confident that disrespectful behaviour, including bullying, will be dealt with. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed promptly and effectively.

Discriminatory behaviours will not be tolerated.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy is based on the national guidance set out in Respect for All which can be found here:

[Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People](#)

### **Aims of this policy.**

To ensure that a culture of positive, respectful relationships in which bullying behaviour cannot thrive, exists within our school.

To support children, parents and staff in identifying what is bullying behaviour and what is not bullying behaviour.

To ensure that all children, staff and parents recognise prejudiced-based bullying.

To provide clear guidance for children, staff and parents how our school will deal effectively with incidents of all bullying behaviour.

### **What is bullying?**

*“Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person’s sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in. “The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.”*

- This behaviour can harm people mentally, emotionally, socially and physically.
- The actual behaviour (for example, actions, looks, messages, confrontations or physical interventions) does not always need to be repeated for it to have an ongoing impact. The fear of behaviour reoccurring may have a lasting impact.
- Bullying is more likely to take place in the context of an existing imbalanced relationship but may also occur where no previous or current relationship exists.
- Bullying may be carried out by an individual or can sometimes involve a group of people.

Bullying behaviour can include the following:

- 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 phones/tablets.
- 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).
- Increasing the reach and impact of bullying or prejudice through the recruitment and/ or involvement of a wider group.

Labelling children as “bullies”, “victims” or perpetrators is not helpful and must be avoided. The use of the term “bullying behaviour” will be used.

### **Dealing with bullying behaviour from out with the school.**

The pervasive nature of bullying means that it can take place in a variety of locations and situations making it difficult for the school to identify clear boundaries where their responsibilities begin and end. However, there is a need to understand that the impacts of such incidents can affect learning, participation and wellbeing. This means that children involved in incidents out of school may require to be supported, but the school does not need to investigate and respond to the incident itself.

### **Prejudice-based Bullying and Language**

All types of prejudice-based bullying and language will be challenged. This includes bullying related to the protected characteristic listed in the Equality Act 2010, (See our school Equalities Policy), as well as other forms of prejudice and discrimination related to characteristics that are not protected by law, e.g. socio-economic or appearance related bullying.

### **What is not bullying?**

Schools deal with a variety of behaviours daily. However, while some of these behaviours may be reported or described by a child or their family as bullying, it is important to recognise that not all such behaviours will be bullying or should be treated as such.

In our school each incident of reported bullying will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. An investigation into the context and the circumstances of the incident will be carried out by a member of the Senior Management Team (Principal Teacher or Head Teacher). Each set of circumstances will be fact specific, and SMT staff must ensure that they have gathered all relevant information before deciding and identifying what response is appropriate.

It is important that children get a chance to discuss how they feel and that staff help them to develop skills in social competence and communication needed to manage relationships.

Incidents deemed to be bullying will be recorded on SEEMIS.

### **Differentiating Bullying from Conflict**

Children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is not considered bullying and is a normal part of growing up.

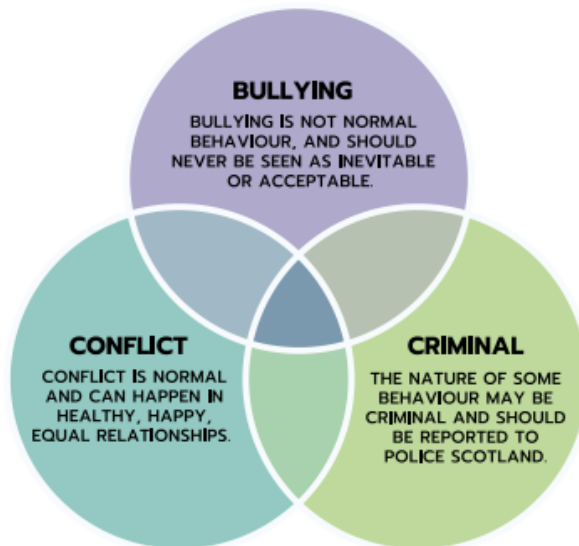
### **Support for children and young people experiencing conflict.**

Early intervention and prevention are key elements in ensuring we get it right for all our children and young people. Where concerns are raised about behaviour that is deemed to be conflict rather than bullying, a child or young person may still need support to navigate the conflict or deal with the emotional impact. In our school setting, there are a range of ways in which we support the wellbeing of children and young people. Our Health and Wellbeing programme of study is based on Getting it Right for Every Child wellbeing indicators, Health and Wellbeing Responsibility of All, the Health and Wellbeing aspect of the curriculum and learning in Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education.

During issues of conflict our school will appropriately include the child and/or children involved to talk about the behaviour, identify the conflict and create a resolution. All next steps identified will be communicated with the children themselves, relevant staff and parent(s), and provide reassurance that the young person's wellbeing is being supported.

The diagram below shows how differing behaviours may overlap or escalate in outcome.

## DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN CONFLICT, BULLYING AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR



### ● CONFLICT

Usually at least one person doesn't want the conflict to go on unresolved, and will try to take action to improve the situation. It can highlight the importance of the relationship, providing a chance to build on strengths, solve problems, and move forward positively.

Healthy relationship conflict is not the same as bullying and is unlikely to lead to bullying as the people involved have a mutual interest in restoring equilibrium and maintaining connection.

### ● BULLYING

Bullying occurs within social relationships and typically involves an imbalance of power that allows a relationship of dominance and subordination to emerge. Bullying can be intentional or unintentional, occurring once or repeatedly.

Resolution usually requires adult support, meaningful intervention and a change of behaviour in the instigating person. There can sometimes be an escalation from bullying to violence.

### ● CRIMINAL

While bullying is not in itself a crime, some behaviour that may be reported or perceived as bullying could constitute a criminal offence, such as physical or sexual violence, online behaviours or hate crime.

It is not for staff to determine if behaviour is criminal; they should seek immediate support from Police Scotland if they have reason to believe that a crime may have occurred or that a child or young person has been seriously harmed.

### **Supporting the young person experiencing bullying**

When supporting a young person who is experiencing bullying, it is crucial to listen to them, take them seriously, understand the impact the behaviour is having on them, and reassure them that the bullying taking place is not their fault.

Support can include:

- active listening/counselling/talking. This can help them process what is happening, cope with the emotional impact of bullying and think about potential solutions, any consequences of these and support available.
- reporting bullying. Encourage them to share their experience with a trusted adult and report the bullying to the relevant authorities, such as school, or the online platform where the bullying occurred.
- peer support. Peer support groups can provide a safe space for them to share their experiences and feelings.
- developing a wellbeing plan. Agreeing next steps, monitoring progress and making adjustments to the plan, particularly if initial actions are not successful.
- Keep parents and families informed.

### **Supporting the child or young person displaying bullying behaviours**

Children and young people who exhibit bullying behaviour need adult support to understand the underlying thoughts and feelings driving their actions, and to develop healthier responses and relationships. It is crucial to help them recognise the harm their behaviour causes and repair relationships. It is also important to challenge prejudicial attitudes through education and building empathy. Responses should focus on challenging behaviour, encouraging reflection and preventing reoccurrence.

Our **Positive Relationship** policy sets out our clear expectations of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and the associated responses, including consequences, which all school staff follow. Our Positive Relationship policy is shared with children and staff on an annual basis and staff are consistent in their implementation of consequences for negative behaviour towards others.

For children and young people displaying bullying behaviours, adult support can include:

- active listening. To understand what is lying behind the behaviour and help them develop healthier ways to cope with difficult feelings.
- education. Promote empathy and kindness and help them understand the impact of their actions and why their behaviour is unacceptable.
- parental involvement. Parents will be involved in monitoring the situation and guiding more positive behaviour.
- restorative actions. Encourage them to make amends and repair harm, where appropriate.
- developing a wellbeing plan. Setting out responses, monitoring progress and making adjustments to the plan, particularly if initial actions are not successful

## **Creating an Ethos of Anti-bullying**

All staff can create an atmosphere of empathy, kindness, co-operation and mutual respect for differences by:

- Encouraging interdependence and feelings of mutual respect.
- Positively encourage children to support each other.
- Emphasise that there is not such thing as an innocent bystander and that we should support others by reporting bullying behaviour.
- Share out responsibilities fairly.
- Ensure that comparisons between children are minimised and all skills are valued.
- Plan opportunities to promote collaborative and co-operative learning.
- Support activities which allow children to work together to identify problems and be solution focussed.
- Never tolerating or dismissing name calling or mean comments in classrooms or playgrounds – supporting children to understand the impact that these have on others.
- Always supporting children affected by bullying behaviour, showing interest and concern, and acknowledging their distress.
- Encouraging children to listen to each other's point of view and encourage empathy towards others.
- Keeping records of incidents.

## **Reporting, recording, investigating and monitoring**

Our school and Early Years is committed to taking a consistent approach to responding to concerns of allegations of bullying behaviour.

### **Reporting**

There are different ways in which our school can be made aware of potential bullying behaviour:

- Raised by the child who believes that they are being bullied.
- Raised by another child who witnessed behaviour which they perceived as bullying.
- Raised by a parent or carer or other family member.
- Be observed by a member of staff or a volunteer.

Raising a concern may be done through communications such as Learning Journals, face to face with a class teacher, PT or HT; or via a phone call to the school.

Staff who observe bullying should raise concerns directly with the HT or PT and record this via a **Record of Concern** sheet.

### **What information should be recorded?**

It is important that a thorough picture of the bullying incident be recorded. When recording potential bullying incidents, the following information must be included:

- the children and young people involved, as well as staff/volunteers or any other adults who witnessed the incident or were involved in the initial response.
- where and when bullying has taken place.

- the type of bullying experienced, e.g. name-calling, rumours, threats; • any prejudice-based attitudes or behaviour presenting.
- details of any protected characteristic(s).
- consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns.
- the outcome, including if the issue was resolved, not resolved or unfounded.
- the impact of the incident, including consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns.
- actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

In line with the UNCRC (including Article 12, children and young people have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously, and Article 16, children and young people have the right to a private life), where possible, the content of this record should be agreed with the child or young person.

### **Investigation**

Bullying is a combination of behaviour and impact and will be addressed with compassion and professional curiosity when investigating incidents.

Although bullying is often persistent, a single incident can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people and instil a fear that it might happen again.

Impact on the individual/group's health and wellbeing and/or learning and school environment will be established through an investigation of alleged, observed or reported bullying incidents.

Teachers and all those working with children will identify and act on any concerns to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person concerned, in line with their local child protection procedures.

A helpful approach would 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 – for example, is there a child protection concern?
- what attitudes, prejudices or other factors may have influenced the behaviour?

Once an investigation has concluded, SEEMIS Pastoral Notes will be updated with the outcome of the investigation. This will include whether the incident was found to be resolved, not resolved or unfounded.

Where an incident is found to be bullying, we will record what supports/interventions were put in place for both for individuals/groups affected by the behaviour and those displaying the behaviour.

If the incident is not bullying, but due to other factors such as changing friendship groups or interpersonal conflict, it can still be difficult for a child or young person and their parents. In these situations, it is important for those involved to understand that even though the incident is not bullying there will still be a response from staff who can work with the child or young person and potentially peers to improve the situation.

## **Responding to bullying incidents**

- All responses to alleged bullying incidents will be child-centred and reviewed individually.
- We will consider the best way to support the child experiencing the bullying behaviour, and also the person displaying this behaviour, to prevent similar behaviour happening in the future.
- Our Positive Relationships Policy outlines our expectations for behaviour and consequences as a result of negative behaviour.
- A meeting involving parents and the child **experiencing** bullying behaviour will communicate the school's response to the allegation.
- A meeting involving parents and the child **perpetrating** bullying behaviour will communicate the school's response to the allegation.

There may be instances where privacy concerns relating to the other child or young person involved means information cannot be shared with the person affected. This lack of information may make the child or young person affected, or their family members, feel that nothing has been done in response to the incident. In such instances the need to respect privacy will be explained and reassurance given that corrective action has been taken.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Whole School Management**

- In consultation with stakeholders, including children and young people and their parent(s) and staff/volunteers, develop and implement a local whole school anti-bullying policy that is in step with the principles and values that underpin Respect for All.
- Explicitly refer in the policy (Equalities Policy) to protected characteristics and set out a commitment to challenging all forms of prejudice-based bullying.
- Develop and implement good practice to promote a climate, culture and ethos of fairness, equality, inclusion and respect in line with **Respect for All** and related national guidance on promoting positive and respectful relationships and behaviour.
- Make *Anti-Bullying*, *Positive Relationships* and *Equalities* policies readily accessible to all, including children and young people, teachers and staff, and parents/carers ensuring everyone is clear on action being taken to prevent bullying.
- Ensure a range of safe and easy pathways for children and young people, staff and parents/carers to report bullying, and that recording and monitoring is undertaken.
- Embed within anti-bullying policy action that will be taken to promote equality, diversity and children's rights.
- Provide access to anti-bullying professional learning/training and materials to support all those who work with children and young people in the setting.
- Respond to incidents of bullying on an individual basis using SEEMIS or alternative recording systems to proactively case-manage each situation. Employ a respectful, proportionate and holistic approach, adopting responses which take account of the impact of the incident as well as any underlying prejudice or other negative attitudes.

### **Children and Young People**

- See bullying as a violation of children's rights and treat people with respect.
- Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practices in schools, clubs and groups attended and know how to report bullying behaviour.
- Where safe and appropriate, challenge bullying behaviour.
- Share concerns with a trusted adult and/or peers and work collaboratively with adults and peers to help create safe and positive environments where bullying cannot thrive.

### **Parents**

- Listen and take children and young people's concerns seriously.
- Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practice, including complaints procedures, in any school/clubs/groups attended by their child or young person.
- Share any concerns about a child as early as possible with a teacher, practitioner or coach.
- Engage directly, or through school Parent Forum/Parent Council or other appropriate forums, to contribute to and learn about anti-bullying policy and practice.
- Role model respect and promote safe, positive, supportive and respectful relationships for children and young people. Reflect this in all interactions with school/club staff and volunteers.

### **Staff and Volunteers**

- Listen and take children and young people seriously.
- Act in accordance with the relevant professional standards and codes of conduct, e.g. GTCS Standards or SSSC. Share concerns appropriately within your organisation/service and seek support where necessary.
- Understand our school anti-bullying policy and procedures and act in accordance with these.
- Embed the promotion of equality, diversity and children's rights in own professional practice, seeking training relevant to these areas.
- Role-model respect and promote safe, positive, supportive and respectful relationships. Reflect this in all interactions with children and young people and their parents.

This policy will be communicated, evaluated, and reviewed with children, parents and carers, and staff/volunteers every three years.

Our school and early years is committed to ensuring that training for staff and volunteers is up to date and ongoing.

Review date: November 2027