

# Educational Services

## Management Guidelines on Anti-Bullying

August 2019  
MG/Anti-Bullying/Version 3

**THE  
SOUTH  
AYRSHIRE  
WAY**



RESPECTFUL  
SUPPORTIVE

## Version Control

Version	Date Issued	Last Review Date	Author	Update Information
1	July 2017		K MacDonald	
2	06 August 2018		K MacDonald	<p><b>Page 9</b> – Recording should now take place using the Bullying and Equalities Module within SEEMiS;</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> – Some terms changed to reflect changes that will be made within the SEEMiS system this year; and</p> <p><b>Appendix 4</b> – Flow chart altered to include the change in Page 9.</p>
3	19 August 2019	24 July 2019	K MacDonald	<p><b>Page 9</b> – ALL school must now use the Bullying and Equalities Module within SEEMiS</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> – statement added to the top of the form</p> <p><b>Appendix 4-</b> flow chart altered to remove reference to using paper forms to record incidents</p>

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# Introduction

*“Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on the 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

The purpose of these management guidelines is to support the development of a positive, respectful and supportive environment in all South Ayrshire schools<sup>1</sup>. To this end, South Ayrshire Council recognizes that bullying and prejudiced based bullying is often a combination of behaviours that impact negatively on a young person’s wellbeing and capacity to learn. These guidelines are intended to provide guidance to all stakeholders in the management of bullying behaviours that prevent young people feeling safe, included, responsible, respected, active, nurtured, achieving and healthy and from reaching their full potential.

These guidelines also recognize that when instances of bullying do arise, schools must act quickly to address the impact on both those who experience and those who display bullying behaviour.

## 1. Definition of Bullying

- 1.1. In Scotland we describe bullying as behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or demeaned.
- 1.2. Bullying is defined by its impact on the person/people affected as a result of the intended or unintended behaviour and actions of others. Bullying behaviour impacts on the wellbeing of those affected and results in a reduced sense of self-esteem and a negative impact on wellbeing. Bullying behaviour is typically characterised by the individual’s involved perceiving difference between themselves and others.
- 1.3. Bullying can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidating behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can be bullied on the grounds of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion or other real or perceived difference.
- 1.4. Bullying can be subtle or it can be overt. It can cause short-term suffering for the pupil who experiences bullying behaviour or it can have long-term effects.

Bullying behaviours may include:

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening;
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours;
- Pushing, hitting, tripping and kicking;
- Taking and damaging belongings;
- Online bullying: sending abusive texts, email or instant messages (see specific guidance [Appendix 1](#));
- Intimidation and extortion e.g. taking someone’s lunch money;
- Making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied; and
- Targeting someone because of who they are or are perceived to be.

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<sup>1</sup> All learning establishments including early year centres, primary, secondary and special schools

These behaviours can take place in schools, children's services, residential services, at home and in the community; at youth groups, at out of school care and can come from children, young people and adults.

- 1.5 “*respectme*” is Scotland’s anti-bullying service and its vision is of a respecting, just, equal and inclusive Scotland in which all children and young people can live free from bullying and harassment and are encouraged to reach their full potential.
- 1.6 South Ayrshire Council shares this vision and promotes a culture where bullying behaviour is not acceptable. We are committed to establishing a caring, learning community where all members are valued and everyone has a responsibility to promote respect, openness, honesty and understanding.

## 2. Legislation

- 2.1 The following policy frameworks need to be considered when schools are devising anti-bullying policies to try and prevent bullying type behaviours in school.

### 2.2 **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

Bullying is a Breach of Children’s Rights.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of a school’s planning, policies, practice and ethos.

The UNCRC, article 2 states (without discrimination):

*“the convention applies to every child whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, no matter what type of family they come from.”*

Under the UNCRC, all children and young people have the right not to be discriminated against or treated unfairly; to be treated in their best interests and to have their rights respected, protected and fulfilled. Children and young people have the right to say what they think and have their opinions taken into account; to get and share information and to think and believe what they want, as long as this is not damaging to others. Children and young people have a right to meet together and join groups as long as they do not stop others.

They have a right to respect their rights, freedoms and reputations. They should have a right to privacy and protection from attacks against their way of life, good name, families and homes; and they have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically and mentally. Children and young people have a right to an education which encourages children to respect their own and other cultures.

Bullying behaviour goes against many of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child articles and may prevent children and young people from enjoying their full rights and developing their full potential in learning and in life.

In South Ayrshire we believe Education is an environment where children and young people’s dignity should be respected at all times and where personality, talents and abilities should be encouraged to shine and be celebrated.

### 2.3 **Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)**

This sets out how agencies and professionals should work together to promote the welfare and rights of the children and young people, and ensure that they are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included<sup>2</sup>.

### 2.4 **Curriculum for Excellence**

Children and young people are expected to achieve Health and Wellbeing outcomes as part of their learning experience. The area of key relevance is “*Relationships*”.

### 2.5 **The Equality Act 2010**

This act provides protection from discrimination, harassment and victimization based on a range of “*protected characteristics*”. These characteristics are defined in the Act as:

- Race;
- Sex;
- Disability;
- Sexual orientation;
- Religion or belief;
- Age<sup>3</sup>;
- Gender reassignment;
- Pregnancy and maternity; and
- Marriage and civil partnership<sup>2</sup>.

In addition to the Protected Characteristics covered by the Act, there is an expectation that other groups will be considered, for example:

- Looked after children;
- Young carers;
- Children and young people living in deprivation; and
- Body image issues.

For further information of prejudice based bullying please see [Appendix 2](#).

More information can be found at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/technical-guidance-schools-scotland>

## 3. **Expectations and Responsibilities**

### 3.1 **Expectations and Responsibilities of All Staff**

All staff/volunteers, parents, children and young people must understand that even an incident that occurs in isolation can represent bullying behaviour, leaving a young person worried, unhappy and/or frightened.

All staff of schools employed by South Ayrshire Council shall:

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/getting-it-right-for-every-child/>

<sup>3</sup> Age and marriage and civil partnership are not protected characteristics for schools provision. However, in general, the Act applies across all protected characteristics in a consistent way.

- Strictly follow school policies regarding recording, monitoring and responding to incidents, including: Listening to all children and young people, so as to establish supportive relationships whereby young people feel secure in sharing difficult emotions and sensitive aspects of their lives; reporting any bullying incident; preventatively highlighting and correcting attitudes and behaviour that lead to bullying and discrimination.
- Model behaviour which promotes Health and Wellbeing and build into everyday practice an ethos of caring and compassion, as part of a whole school approach in preventative measures as regards bullying behaviour.
- Undertake continuous professional development or training about bullying behaviour and policies.
- Support/guidance and nurture staff are encouraged to undergo suicide prevention training<sup>4</sup>.

Support is available at:

**E-mail:** [beautifulinsideandoutsocio@gmail.com](mailto:beautifulinsideandoutsocio@gmail.com)

**Tel:** 07984 328808

**Online page:** [www.facebook.com/beautifulinsideandoutsocio](http://www.facebook.com/beautifulinsideandoutsocio)

### 3.2 **Expectations and Responsibilities of Head Teachers and Managers of Schools and Other Educational Establishments**

All Head Teachers and managers of schools employed by South Ayrshire Council shall:

- Be responsible for ensuring that their establishment has comprehensive, clear policies outlining preventative measures and a range of strategies in response to bullying behaviour that are in line with authority guidelines.
- Consult with and familiarise staff, children and young people, parents and carers, including Parent Council members, with the content of these policies, working to engage staff, pupils and parents/carers as consistently active partners in minimising bullying and its impact on children and young people.
- Ensure that key staff undergo suicide prevention training, so as to be well-equipped in the appropriate language required to assess risk and support all children and young people; encourage all other staff working in schools to undergo awareness raising training<sup>3</sup>.
- Regularly monitor and ensure training of all staff about bullying behaviour and responding to bullying.
- Insist upon all incidents of bullying reported or witnessed, being recorded as soon as possible and responded to in accordance with anti-bullying policies, with actions taken and outcomes being recorded.
- Liaise, as deemed necessary, with outside agencies to address the needs of individuals.
- Regularly monitor, whilst auditing annually, in consultation with staff and young people, about bullying incidents and the effectiveness of staff responses to minimise the negative impact on the young person.
- These monitoring duties may be delegated to a promoted member of staff e.g. Depute Head Teacher, who shall follow up incidents and ensure that these have been addressed in line with the schools agreed policy.
- Provide appropriate annual data when requested by the Director of Educational services.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.chooselife.net/Training/index.aspx>

### 3.3 **Expectations and Responsibilities of Children and Young People**

- Follow guidance detailed within the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Participate in any consultation regarding anti-bullying.
- Treat your peers with respect.
- If you think you are being bullied seek help by confiding in someone you trust.
- Discuss and agree what options are available.
- If the bullying is online there are many useful strategies that can be used (see [Appendix 1](#)).
- Be aware of what you post and share online, and treat people with the same respect as you would if they were in the room.
- If you see someone else being bullied report it to a trusted adult.
- Use items such as 'worry' or 'bully' boxes if available.

### 3.4 **Expectations of Parents and Carers**

- Familiarise yourself with the schools anti-bullying policy.
- Participate in any consultation regarding anti-bullying.
- Attend any training offered on anti-bullying.
- Actively listen to your child or young person when they tell you about a suspected bullying incident.
- Stay calm.
- Take a lead from your child or young person as to what pace to go at. This will help restore their feeling of being in control.
- Ask them what they want you to do.
- Explore options together; there is never one single answer.
- Telling children or young people to 'hit back' is a common response but not necessarily the best or safest option.
- Contact the school and ask for an appointment.
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve the situation. Don't expect the situation to be fully resolved at the first meeting, that won't always be possible.
- Keep channels of communication open until the situation is resolved.

## 4. **Strategies to Prevent Bullying Behaviour**

4.1 There should prevail a whole school approach to preventing bullying behaviours. It is of paramount importance to recognise that bullying behaviour exists in your school. To do otherwise would suggest that bullying is not recognised or appropriately addressed.

### 4.2 **Preventative Measures**

All schools should work closely to create and maintain a caring, positive and supportive ethos. In school, anti-bullying messages may be reinforced through the following prevention measures:

- Anti-bullying week activities, with the clear message being communicated to staff, children and young people and parents/carers, that bullying behaviour shall not be tolerated.
- Anti-bullying awareness-raising sponsored events.
- Assemblies, with the emphasis on the power of acts of kindness to improve the lives of others. Conversely, children and young people shall be educated on the negative impact of bullying.



- Drama/Musical theatre anti-bullying workshops developed by the staff and children and young people, or implemented by an outside drama group.
- Posters produced by children and young people in school, as well as by professional bodies.
- Newsletters/website pages.
- Handbook information.
- Nurture group resilience and anti-bullying themes.
- Working towards achieving UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools accreditation and the principles taught therein.
- Curricular inputs/PSE.

4.3 Children and young people must be encouraged to actively help the young person being bullied and to help prevent bullying behaviour. This can be done by reporting the bullying behaviour to a member of staff, by using worry boxes or by encouraging the young person experiencing bullying behaviour, to report the incident to a trusted adult.

## 5. Dealing with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

### 5.1 Responding to Bullying Behaviour

- Staff must use their knowledge of the children and young people and use their professional judgement when responding to incidents based on evidence and investigation.
- When a young person claims to have been experiencing bullying behaviour, it is ultimately crucial that each complaint is investigated swiftly and with a consistent approach. How the person who has experienced bullying behaviour perceives his/her situation is important and must be taken seriously, so as to avoid short or long-term damage to the child or young person and to his/her feelings of self-esteem, self-worth and value. Bullying behaviour can be one-off or repeated incidents. Both types can have a negative impact.
- Impartiality and confidentiality must be respected, with knowledge of the incident being limited to those directly involved with the incident and with any necessary action that follows. It is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can isolate a child, rather than help them to recover or alter their behaviour.
- Inform Head Teacher or other designated member of staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Record reported and/or witnessed incidents in the Bullying and Equalities Module in within the SEEMiS system, regardless of the outcome.
- Assess as to whether or not immediate remedial action can be taken to resolve the situation. This can be achieved through peer mediation, or through a system whereby vulnerable children and young people receive support as part of a friendship group. If this is successful, record in young person's pastoral notes. If this is not possible, a wider investigation is required.
- Decide with the Named Person and in consultation with the child or young person if parents/carers are to be informed. Any decision to inform the parent should involve the child or young person and take into account informal advice from the named person or member of staff who is trusted by the child or young person. If the incident constitutes a child protection issue child protection procedures should be evoked<sup>5</sup>.
- Consider if involvement of other agencies would be beneficial in supporting the needs of the young person.
- Actions by the children and young people involved in bullying behaviours may lead to exclusion and the nature of the incident shall be identified on the exclusion form (see [Appendix 4](#) for guidance).
- Should parents exercise their right to take further a complaint then they should follow South Ayrshire's "*Listening to You*" complaints procedure.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/clw/education/Education%20Management%20Guidelines/MG%20-%20Child%20Protection%20-%20Draft%20Version%201.pdf>

## 5.2 **Recording and Monitoring Strategies**

See [Appendix 4](#), it may be beneficial to print this back-to-back on an A4 sheet as a reference page for staff.

## 5.3 **Monitoring Bullying Behaviour – Local Authority**

Educational Services will monitor bullying incidents on an annual basis. Data will be gathered for:

- Early years;
- Primary;
- Secondary; and
- Special schools.

Information will also be gathered on the protected characteristics.

Should a school be fortunate in having no incidence of bullying behaviour, nil returns are required. Upon an establishment submitting a nil return, the Head Teacher must provide an explanation and evidence of good practice to the Head of Service so that best practice in tackling bullying behaviour can be shared across all establishments in the authority.

The authority will also seek the views of children and young people and parents by including questions regarding the management of bullying in their annual questionnaires.

This information will be used to:

- Identify patterns of bullying behaviour;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and awareness raising;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of management responses;
- Monitor the impact of these guidelines and school policies; and
- Support schools through Improvement Planning.

## 6. **Wellbeing Concerns**

6.1 The wellbeing of children and young people can be adversely affected by bullying behaviours.

6.2 If there is a continuing wellbeing concern the Head Teacher or designated member of staff should use the National GIRFEC Practice Model and ask five key questions:

1. What is getting in the way of the child or young person's wellbeing?
2. Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
3. What can I do now to help this child or young person?
4. What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
5. What additional help, if any, may be needed by others?

6.3 Where a wellbeing need has been identified and passed to the Named Person (with the consent of parents/carers and children over 12 years) the Named Person must record the need within SEEMiS Pastoral Notes.

6.4 It may be deemed appropriate to arrange a Team Around the Child meeting (TAC). This should be proportionate to the needs of the child and is facilitated at different levels by the Named Person in discussion with the child or young person and their family. The TAC meeting will discuss the concerns and an action plan will be agreed. This may involve

requests for assistance from support agencies. The named person may complete a wellbeing assessment on SEEMiS and it may be shared with other support agencies via AYRshare if appropriate. Further detailed guidance can be found in the South Ayrshire Council Management Guidelines for Staged Intervention and Inclusive practice in Schools.

## 6.5 **The Named Person**

Each child or young person has a Named Person whose job already involves working with children across all services. In nursery, this is the Health visitor. In primary school this is generally the Head Teacher and in secondary school it can be the Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher or Guidance Teacher. They are the first point of contact for children and their families. This Named Person can be involved when there is a concern about a child's wellbeing that is difficult to address and they shall be expected to be vigilant about concerns at an early stage, so as to be able to work with families and other services.

## 7. **Consulting with Children, Young People, Parents and Carers**

*“Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.”*

Article 12, UNCRC

7.1 Regular awareness raising should be available for children and young people organised by pupil councils and/or other pupil groups and supported by schools and educational service staff.

7.2 Schools should work with children and young people to ensure that their views are taken into account in the construction of policies and other information sharing documents.

7.3 Close links with parents and carers, as set out in the Scottish Schools is crucial in assisting schools and learning establishments to deal with bullying behaviour and harassment. Regular awareness raising and training should be available for parents, organised by Parent Councils and supported by schools, learning establishments and education authority staff.

7.4 There are many ways in which both children and young people and parent groups can be consulted and involved in the production of materials to promote respectful relationships within their school community.

These could include:

- Policy development and review;
- Inserts into the curriculum, through learning and teaching;
- Anti-bullying weeks or assemblies;
- Special events for parents and/or children and young people;
- Drama performances;
- Posters/Leaflets;
- Newsletters;
- Children and young people/parent friendly versions of policies;
- Involving children and young people/parent council in communication; and
- Website/Social media.

7.5 Ongoing communication with children, young people, parents, community members and partner organisations is essential to the success of your policy.

## 8. Communication of Respectful Relations Policies

- 8.1 A respectful relationships policy helps to provide learners with an environment in which self-discipline, respect and care for others are evident; hence every member of staff working in a school environment needs to develop an awareness of procedures and information in relation to anti-bullying. Each establishment should communicate its anti-bullying policy annually.
- 8.2 This can form part of in-service day training and/or staff/team meeting/twilight session. It should also be communicated with new members of staff/NQTs/students/volunteers as part of staff induction/staff handbook information.
- 8.3 It can be communicated with parents/carers during parent council and other parent meetings. It should also be available on your school web site.
- 8.4 Children and young people can be informed in a variety of ways including children and young people council meetings, assemblies and sessions delivered by class teachers.
- 8.5 On-going communication with children and young people, parents/carers, community members and partner organisations is essential to the success of this policy. Schools should seek to inform their community of the approach of their policy using existing and new communication technologies – such as newsletters, a policy manual kept in the organisation’s office, notice boards, assemblies, parent nights, open days, social media, school websites and forums.

## 9. Training and Staff Development

- 9.1 Schools may provide awareness training in a variety of ways. They may deliver In-house training at twilight meetings or in-service days. They may also release staff to attend training sessions delivered by a variety of external providers. Scotland’s anti-bullying service, [respectme](#), provides training for trainers at no charge, thus allowing organisations to develop their own sustainable approach by having in-house CLPL accredited expertise.

## 10. Establishment Policies

- 10.1 These management guidelines apply to all South Ayrshire Council schools but it is acknowledged that in order to manage the impact of bullying behaviours effectively, individual establishments will develop additional guidance that reflects their own needs and circumstances within the context of the is policy.
- 10.2 In developing guidance that reflects their local circumstances, schools will also ensure that their policy sits within the broader context of Curriculum for Excellence and GIRFEC and will take account of the following:
- That personal safety, positive relationships and Health and Wellbeing is promoted across a learning community.
  - That bullying and the impact of bullying behaviours are addressed through planned programmes of study and that their content is regularly visited to ensure that it is meeting the needs of children and young people.
  - That the impact of mobile technologies in creating opportunities for misuse through “*online bullying*” is recognised and addressed.
  - That consideration is given to children and young people’s experiences at times of transition.

- That all staff are aware of the policy and their individual roles and responsibilities as required by the policy and that they have access to relevant training that supports the successful and consistent implementation of the policy.
- That school's involve parents and carers in opportunities to engage with the policy, its content and its implementation.
- That school's engage in robust monitoring and review of their policy (ideally every three years).

## Appendix 1 – Specific Information/Guidance Regarding Online Bullying

The following information is sourced from content from [respectme](#), Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service, website.

### What is online bullying?

Online bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging and social networking websites. Texts, messages or images are sent or posted on sites, which hurt, intimidate or embarrass another person. The identity of the person carrying out the online bullying can be hidden from the person targeted. Online bullying is no different from any other forms of bullying behaviour; the behaviour is the same and the impact is no less devastating. Advances in technology are simply providing an alternative means of reaching people.

For children and young people the internet is something that allows them to connect with friends and other children and young people at any time of the day or night. This means that online bullying can happen virtually anywhere, and is no longer confined to the classroom or playground. Children and young people can be targeted in their own homes, in their bedrooms and personal spaces where they should feel safe and protected.

Most children and young people do use technology responsibly. Disconnecting mobile phones or the internet will not make bullying behaviour stop. All adults need to take an active interest in the way technology is being used by children and young people and connect with them at home, at school, and in our communities.

### Mobile phones

Most people are familiar with the use of mobile phones and the ability to send and receive text messages, but the additional features that many mobiles have these days, such as picture messaging and video recording, provide an additional way of communicating. Bluetooth technology also provides a way of connecting and exchanging information between mobile phones, laptops, PCs, printers, digital cameras, and video game consoles. This makes it much easier for large groups of people to view information in a very short space of time.

### Social networking sites

Social networking websites are increasingly being used by children and young people (and indeed by many adults) as a key way of communicating and building relationships, or making new friends online. Sites such as Facebook are online 'communities' of people who share interests and activities, and communicate through the use of messages, videos, discussion groups and blogs, which are similar to online diaries. It is a place where people can create a personal network that connects them to other users.

### What to do if a child says they are being bullied online

Children and young people often report they are reluctant to tell an adult that they are being bullied online because they believe that the adult will over-react. For children and young people this would mean having access to their mobile phone or their computer taken away. Assure them that they have done the right thing by telling you; it can be difficult for children and young people to recognise that they are being bullied online.

To support the child or young person it is important to understand what you are both dealing with.

There are some questions you can ask to find out more about what has been going on:

- What has been said?
- Who has been saying it?
- How long has it been going on?
- Has the online bullying been accompanied by bullying behaviour in 'real' life?

- What have they tried to do about it already?
- How has it been making them feel/how has it been affecting them?
- Have they been storing/keeping any of the bullying messages?
- What else has happened since it started (has anyone 'hacked' into their page or posed as them online?)
- Are there any images/photos/videos involved?

### **Decide a plan of action with the child or young person**

It is vital that the child or young person feels involved and experiences an element of control about the steps that will be taken to address the bullying behaviour.

Schools should inform parents when online bullying is reported. The steps that parents or schools in consultation with parents may consider taking are:

### **Going through any messages that they have received and kept**

If you feel that any of these messages can be construed as illegal then keep copies, dates, times, email addresses or phone numbers and take them to the police.

You may consider asking them not to open any further online or text messages from these addresses and phone numbers, but to allow you to open them instead.

You might want to reply to these messages but be very careful not to respond in a manner which could be seen as threatening or harassing. It may be enough to respond saying that you are an adult and that the messages they are sending are hurtful, causing you and the young person concern, they could be against the law and that they should stop sending them.

### **Changing their mobile phone number**

It is important that they know not to give their mobile number away to people that they do not trust. If the new number falls into the wrong hands again it may not be because they have been careless, but that they have given the number to someone they trusted who has then passed it on to others.

### **Changing their online profile**

Log-in names and profiles on social networking sites can be changed easily and the child/young person should be reminded, as above, only to accept trusted real life friends as online friends.

Personal and identifying details should be kept to a minimum. Pages can be made private so they are only shared with friends, and are not public and available for anyone to see. Designs or cartoon characters can be used instead of photographs and nicknames can be used instead of real names.

### **Involving other agencies**

When the online bullying is being carried out by someone that they know and see on a regular basis, it might be worth involving other agencies.

### **Supporting the child/young person**

It is important to recognise that because they have been bullied online, they will need the same support as they would if they had experienced any other type of bullying behaviour. This support, and their experience of how bullying behaviour is addressed and resolved, begins as soon as they tell you that they are being bullied.

### **What to do if you discover that a child is bullying others online**

It can be distressing to discover that a child or young person has been bullying someone, regardless of what form that bullying behaviour has taken, but it is important that you remain calm. All behaviour communicates feeling. Are they being encouraged to join in with bullying behaviour and they just do it

to stay part of that group? Are they looking for attention and this is their way of getting it? Are they unhappy with some other aspect of their life and they are taking out their frustration on this person? Be prepared to deal with prejudiced attitudes. The behaviour behind the bullying behaviour might stem from racism, homophobia or ignorance about a different culture or religion. Do not label the child or young person a 'bully'. Talk about the behaviour behind the bullying and why it is unacceptable.

Bullying behaviour is never acceptable. Try to get them to understand the impact that their behaviour will be having on the health and well-being of the other person. How would they feel if someone was posting malicious messages about them on websites or sending them threatening text messages when they were in the 'safety' of their own home? How would they like to experience a knot in their stomach every time they receive a text message or email?

Explain that all bullying behaviour carries consequences and they could get into serious trouble, resulting in a criminal record. There are laws surrounding the use of mobile phones and the internet and it could be that their behaviour is contravening one of these laws.

Agree what you are going to do to stop the bullying behaviour. You should alert the parent or carer of the other person involved to make sure they are aware of what has been happening and to ensure that the person being bullied gets any support that they need. It is also important to get support for the person exhibiting the bullying behaviour. Revisit the reasons behind their bullying behaviour and identify the best way of dealing with this.

There might be another adult or older sibling that they would feel comfortable talking to. There are also a number of organisations who offer a counselling service, including: The Bullying Line - 0800 44 1111 and Childline - 0800 1111, ParentLine Scotland also offers a counselling service for adults - 0808 800 2222.

### **Reporting Inappropriate Messages**

The vast majority of responsible social networking sites provide tools for users to manage their own profile. This includes giving users the ability to make their profile 'private', delete messages if they find them to be nasty, offensive or they just do not want them to appear on their page, they can effectively deny access to people formerly regarded as 'friends' from seeing, reading, commenting on or posting messages to their page.

The 'report abuse' tool allows users to report any content, postings or comments that appear on their own page or other sites that they think contravene the terms and conditions of the site or which they consider to be illegal, offensive, harassing or bullying in nature.

Social networking sites rely on users making use of these tools to effectively 'police' the site as they do not have the capacity to monitor each and every profile every day. In general, they advise that nasty comments are ignored and deleted unless they are threatening or illegal, in which case they should be reported to the site administrators and, where applicable, the police.

All members of social networking sites are encouraged to take responsibility for the content of their own page, and to use all available measures to reduce public access to their profile.

### **Text Bullying**

As with social networking sites, responsible mobile phone providers will support people to stop text bullying. Any nasty or abusive texts should be saved as evidence for the provider. Numbers can be blocked from your phone so that you no longer receive texts, messages or calls from that number. In some cases the police will be able to help, but often they will need evidence of the number and will want to see the texts, so they must be saved.

Responsible mobile phone operators are taking steps to help tackle online bullying. Each phone operator should have a number to ring to report phone bullying.



### **Online bullying and the Law**

When mobile phone and internet technology is abused, or used to harass or threaten others, there may be legal consequences.

### **The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016**

This is new legislation. It hasn't been tested as yet, although technically should a young person decide to pursue legal redress for image sharing without consent the Act would apply.

## Appendix 2 – Prejudice Based Bullying Behaviour

The majority of this text was taken from the *respectme* website, 2017

### Race

*“A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.”*

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Racist bullying can range from name calling and verbal taunts to physical attacks and involves the aggressive targeting of an individual(s) on the grounds of their perceived racial culture and national or religious identity. Not only is this behaviour unacceptable within a school context it is also unlawful.

Gypsy/Travellers are protected under this category.

### Sex

Gender bullying impacts on both males and females.

Bullying in the form of derogatory language and spreading malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour-suggesting they are not being a 'real' man or a 'real woman'. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve the use of terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity.

Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are not perceived to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying.

### Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in a specialist provision.

Children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) may be at greater risk of being bullied. Their ASN may involve obvious physical differences from other pupils, difficulties in understanding and contributing to social interactions, delay in or reduced academic progress, all of which may be used as a basis for bullying behaviour by other young people.

There is also increasing evidence that more able children may be targeted because of their levels of achievement and/or their involvement in out of school activities.

### Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes. Homophobic bullying targets a victim on account of his/her actual/perceived sexual orientation. Children and young people may also be the victims of bullying behaviours as a result of their parent's or carer's perceived or actual sexual orientation.

Homophobic bullying may involve physical, non-physical, direct and indirect bullying behaviours. Unwitting behaviours also contribute to a climate in which homophobic bullying occurs. Homophobic bullying may also include the regular use of consciously offensive and discriminatory language e.g. calling someone 'gay', spreading rumours that cause an individual's perceived sexual orientation to be ridiculed, questioned or insulted.

### Religion or beliefs

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sectarianism is distinct from prejudice between different religions. This should be recognised in all relevant policies in relation to equality and diversity. A denomination or 'sect' is a division or grouping within a faith, for example, Protestants and Catholics within Christianity, Sunni and Shia within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform within Judaism. Denominations within one faith share the same basic (fundamental) elements of the faith but they have differing practices or differing interpretations of specific elements of the faith.

Some children are brought up with the example that sectarian attitudes are acceptable; however, open discussion about sectarian language and symbols can help to challenge many of the historical and cultural myths which encourage sectarian attitudes and behaviour. Such attitudes and behaviours must be constantly challenged. Listening to their children and young people's experiences and highlighting potential consequences can encourage a positive change in behaviour.

Asylum seekers and refugees: there are numerous myths and misconceptions around asylum seekers and refugees which require to be challenged. Workers and families from the EEC are also often mistakenly spoken of as asylum seekers. Asylum seeker and refugees are more likely to become targets of abusive comments when there is a period of economic decline.

Bullying behaviours can range from verbal abuse to physical attack. Children and young people from this group can be socially isolated.

Further advice and resources can be found at [www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)

### Gender reassignment

The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self being male, female or an identity between or outside the two.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result transgender or gender 'variant' children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways, including transphobic and homophobic name calling and deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

Further advice can be found at [www.lgbtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk), <http://www.scottishtrans.org/> and also in SAC Educational Services Management Guideline: Supporting Transgender, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Young People in School.

### Looked After Children

Looked after and accommodated children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour. In many cases there will not be a stable support network to help them deal with the

problem. School staff have a major part to play in ensuring that children in care are healthy, happy, safe and successful.

Looked after and accommodated children and young people may have very similar experiences of bullying behaviour to other young people, but often the bullying behaviour will focus directly on the fact that they are looked after, as well as another number of reasons:

- Regular changes in schools where they are placed which can make forming friendships difficult.
- Poor relationships skills stemming from attachment difficulties.
- Inappropriate reactions to situations as a result of learned behaviours.
- A reluctance to make friends.
- Low self-esteem.
- Lack of role models.
- A heightened sense of privacy.

Like anyone who is seen as 'different' at school, children and young people who are looked after and accommodated may receive unwelcome attention stemming from their circumstances. Sometimes the behaviour of other children and young people is the result of curiosity expressed inappropriately. On other occasions these situations can become more unpleasant, and could develop into bullying behaviour. Children who are looked after away from their home authority but continuing to attend school in their home authority may not be able to access after school clubs and social events easily and this could result in further isolation

### Young Carers

The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or has issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying behaviour for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities. This can make it difficult to form relationships, hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties. Young carers may find themselves being bullied because of the differences or *perceived* differences in their family circumstances.

A child who has the burden of all the household tasks may find it difficult to maintain a high level of personal presentation. The family may have a very low income which affects the opportunity to take part in activities which have to be paid for, and may impact upon the child or young person to be able to 'fit in' with fashion and labels or have the latest mobile phone. Again, such a young person may be reluctant to speak about bullying to prevent drawing further attention to themselves. If they are being questioned about attendance and timekeeping, they may not wish to confide in staff, especially if they feel this will result in additional stress for their parent. They may have a strong sense of self-reliance and independence as a result of their caring responsibilities or place low priority on their own needs.

### Children and Young People living in deprivation (Socio-economic)

Bullying due to social and economic status can take place in any group no matter how homogeneous.

Even small differences in perceived class/family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be seized upon by some young people and used as a basis for bullying behaviours, including:

- Name calling (of children and young people or family members);
- Rumour spreading;
- Graffiti regarding children and young people or family members;

- Shunning;
- References to lack of or over attention to personal hygiene (real or imagined); and
- Mockery of speech patterns/belongings/clothes/felt to reflect differing social economic status.

Such behaviours can be low key and insidious and become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group or class. It is important to remember that this form of bullying can equally be of a pupil from a social economic group perceived as higher earning/believing it socially superior to the majority.

### Body image

Bullying on the grounds of body image is becoming more prevalent. Children and young people who have a condition, injury or illness that makes them look 'different' can be especially vulnerable to appearance-related remarks and bullying behaviour.

Presentation of issues about body image in the mass media exacerbates to this problem. A child or young person who is noticeably over or underweight may find themselves particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour which can take a variety of forms including name-calling, mimicry of eating habits or perceived eating habits, demeanour or physical agility, nasty comments about clothes and general appearance and/or covert photos being taken when changing for PE. Children and young people can develop poor eating habits and eating disorders as a result.

**Appendix 3 – Incident Monitoring Form- Details MUST ultimately be recorded in SEEMiS****Bullying Incident Form**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Child/young person experiencing Name:</b>	<b>Child/young displaying Name:</b>
<b>Class:</b>	<b>Class:</b>
<b>Incident location:</b>	
<b>Reported by:</b>	<b>Addressed by:</b>

<b>Nature of Incident</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Nature of Incident</b>	<b>Tick</b>
Name calling ,teased, put down or threatened		Abusive messages-online/phone/gaming/social media	
Hit, tripped, pushes or kicked		Targeted because of who they are/perceived to be	
Belongings taken or damaged		Other	
Being ignored			
Spreading rumours			

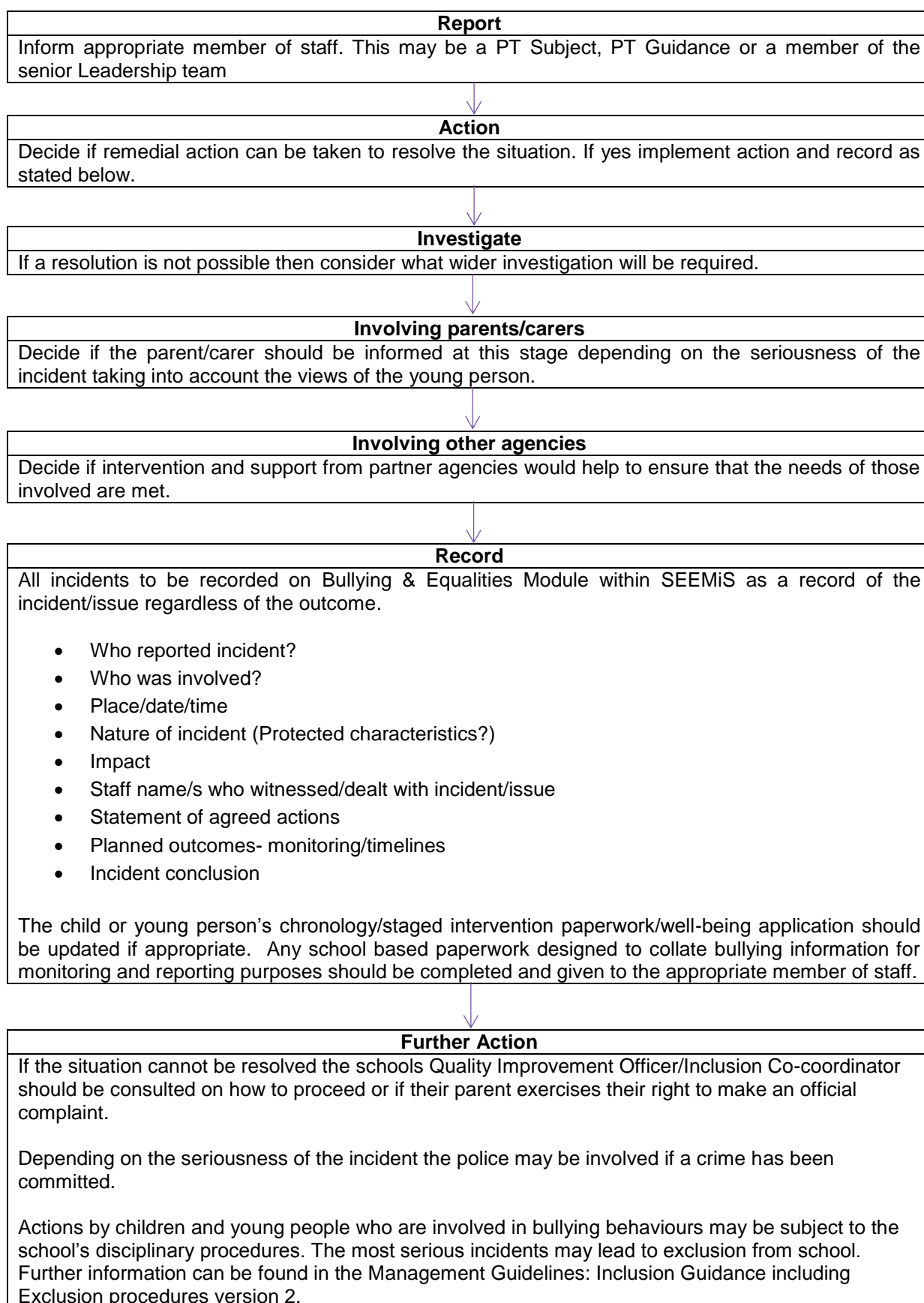
**Incident Detail/Action:**

--

<b>Perceived reasons for bullying</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Perceived reasons for bullying</b>	<b>Tick</b>
Actual or perceived sexual orientation(e.g. homophobic, bi-phobic)		Pregnancy and maternity	
Additional support needs		Race and racism including culture	
Asylum seekers or refugee status		Religion or belief	
Body image or physical appearance		Sectarianism	
Disability		Sexism and gender	
Gender identity or Trans identity		Socio-economic prejudice	
Gypsy/travellers		Young carer	
Looked after children and young people		Not know	
Marriage/civil partnership of parents/carers or other family members		Other: please specify	
Mental health			

<b>Further detail</b>	<b>Tick</b>
Child/young person experiencing involved in other incidents	
Child/young person displaying involved in other incidents	
Parent /carer of child/young person experiencing contacted	
Parent/carers of child/young person displaying contacted	
Police contacted	

<b>Incident conclusion</b>	<b>Tick</b>
Being addressed	
Not resolved	
Resolved	
Unfounded	

**Appendix 4 – Recording and Monitoring Strategies**

Additional guidance notes:

- Children and young people who have additional support needs and are involved with support services should have involvement of these services e.g. social work, education psychologist, family support workers etc. Their views should be sought when a decision to be excluded is being considered and when planning educational provision for the period of exclusion.
- Any decision to exclude MUST take account and be in line with the authority's equalities duty, its duties under the ASL legislation and where one exists, it's duty to provide the services stipulated within the Co-ordinated Support Plan
- Consultation with Social Work Services prior to a decision about exclusion is essential for any pupils on the Child Protection Register to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made. For Looked After Children, in all cases, prior to possible exclusion, the Designated School Manager should seek permission from either the Director - People or a Quality Improvement Manger. They should involve the child's nominated social worker (Lead Professional) in discussion and consideration of the implications of exclusion on the home or care placement to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made.
- Where the incident involves a bilingual pupil or a Gypsy/Traveller pupil, it may be worthwhile making early contact with specialist support staff.
- Enquiries by the media should be directed to South Ayrshire Council Press Officer.