

Biggar Primary School



Anti Bullying Policy

(Reviewed June 2023)

This policy is to complement the work currently being undertaken at Biggar Primary School. It has taken into account

- Scottish Executive publication- Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour
- South Lanarkshire Council Policy-Treat me Well
- Towards A Safer School Policy Statement,SLC

BULLYING

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and victims – it also affects those other children who watch, and less aggressive pupils can be drawn in by group pressure. Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out.

It is a fact of life that certain jokes, insults, intimidating/threatening behaviour, written abuse and violence are to be found in our society. No one person or group should have to accept this type of behaviour. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities available in school.

As a school we believe our pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All schools, both large and small, contain some pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. If a school is well disciplined it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. We have a clear policy on the promotion of good discipline, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour – and will not be tolerated.

It is important therefore that the school has a clear written policy to promote this belief, where pupils and parents/guardians are fully aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

In other words, bullying at Biggar Primary is considered to be,

" persistent intentional behaviour which causes stress to a person emotionally, physically or mentally, where a person is made to feel insecure, threatened or inadequate' Treat Me Well, SLC

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time and can be direct or indirect.

Bullying can be:

Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Damage to property or theft – pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully to force a pupil to hand property over to him/her.

Cyber bullying All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- Additional Support Needs or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying

Bullying can take place in the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips and cyberspace. It can take place during the school day, in the classroom, in the corridor or toilets, in the playground, out of school whilst on residential visits, day visits, in group activities and between families in the local community.

Bullies and Victims

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of bully over victim.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual
- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity - through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts etc

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- lack of eye contact
- becoming short tempered
- change in attitude to people at home.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Guidelines for children - What can you do if you are being bullied?

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way that will help end the bullying and will not make things worse for you

Remember - your silence is the bully's greatest weapon.

1. Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
2. Be proud of who you are - it's good to be individual.
3. Try not to show that you are upset - it's hard but remember a bully thrives on someone's fear.
4. Stay with a group of friends or other people - there is safety in numbers.
5. Be assertive - shout "**No!**" and walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or an adult supervisor.
6. Fighting back could make things worse.
7. Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away.

Guidelines for children - What can you do if you suspect someone is being bullied?

Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way that will help end the bullying and will not make things worse for you. If you know someone is being bullied:

1. **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully - it makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
2. If you feel that you can't get involved - tell an adult **immediately**. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.
3. Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Guidelines for parents

1. Watch for unusual behaviour in your children. For example - they may suddenly not wish to attend school, they may feel ill regularly, they may not complete work to their usual standard.
2. Always take an active role in your child's education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent time with, how lunch time was spent, etc.
3. If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour - inform the school immediately. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
4. It is important that you do not advise your child to fight back - it can make matters worse.

5. Tell your child that there is nothing wrong with him/her - it is not his/her fault that he/she is being bullied.
6. Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying.
7. Encourage your child to ask for help if there is any problem.

School guidelines

1. We must minimise opportunities for bullying - by ensuring as far as possible that supervision is given especially at problem times e.g. in the playgrounds during break times.
2. We must use any opportunity to discuss aspects of bullying, and the appropriate way to behave towards each other e.g. R.E. programme, health education.
3. We must deal quickly, firmly and fairly with any complaints, involving parents where necessary.
4. Our rules should be few, simple and easy to understand.
5. We must not use materials or equipment in our teaching programmes that will give a negative view of any group because of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, etc.
6. We must encourage pupils to treat everyone with respect.
7. We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every possible action to eradicate it from our school.

Prevention

As a Rights Respecting School the ethos and working philosophy of Biggar Primary means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for themselves, each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded.

Staff will regularly discuss bullying and this will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying. Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular discussion.

Staff to follow the equality policy; welcoming every child to our school.

Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Groups/gangs bring about the imbalance of power and must be broken up from around the central bully.

Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings.

Treat other people the way you wish to be treated

At Biggar Primary we use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying through

-school assemblies

- our health and well being programmes eg protective behaviours, rights based learning

-our RE programme

-participating in anti bullying week

- Children are also consulted through in-school pupil questionnaires.

-use of our peace table

-worry boxes in classrooms

Action to be taken if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected we will talk to the suspected victim, the suspected bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified the following action will be taken.

Help, support and counselling will be given, as appropriate, to both the victims and the bullies.

We support the victims in the following ways:

- by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience eg at the peace table
- by informing the victim's parents/guardians.
- by offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps, detailed below, to prevent more bullying.

We will discipline and try to help the bullies in the following ways:

- by talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved.
- by informing the bullies' parents/guardians.
- by continuing to work with the bullies - to help rid them of prejudiced attitudes.
- by taking one or more of the disciplinary steps, detailed below, to prevent more bullying.

Disciplinary Steps

1. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled following sessions at the peace table.
2. The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise and they will be warned officially to stop offending - noted in school peace book/pastoral notes on Seemis. Monitoring strategies will be employed.
3. If the bullying persists they may be issued with further consequences

-eg punishment exercise with the offence detailed. Parents/guardians will be asked to sign the exercise.

- They may be kept in school, under supervision, during break times.

Monitoring strategies will be employed.

4. If the bullying persists parents/guardians will be invited to school to discuss the problem and informed of further sanctions to be employed.

5. If the bullying further persists advice outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying eg Senior Manager Pupil Support, South Lanarkshire Education Department.

6. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Recording of Bullying Incidents

When an incident of suspected bullying has taken place, it must be reported and will normally be investigated by a member of the Senior management team.

In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Headteacher.

General incidences of bullying should be recorded in the Peace book/pastoral notes on Seemis. This would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying.

All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that bullying may be prevented from happening in the future.

HELP ORGANISATIONS:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 020 7354 8321

Children's Legal Centre 0845 345 4345

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 020 8772 9900

Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support , links and advice.

For a copy of Kidscape's free booklets "*Stop Bullying*", "*Preventing Bullying*" and "*You Can Beat Bullying*", send a large (A4) self-addressed envelope (marked "Bully Pack") with 6 first class stamps to:

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens

London SW1W 0DH