



BALFRON HIGH'S APPROACH TO
RESPECT FOR ALL

PREVENTING AND CHALLENGING
BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

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Introduction

‘Bullying has a detrimental impact on children and young people's wellbeing. Children and young people have the right to be safe and secure with strong, positive relationships with peers and with adults, in order to thrive and to achieve their full potential. ‘

Respectme, 2015

The purpose of this guidance is to refresh school policy in line with ‘*Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People*’.

Through the vision, *‘we are committed to providing a **caring, inclusive and high achieving** school community where young people have a **positive and meaningful experience**. We have **high expectations** and are **ambitious** for all of our young people. We are committed to ensuring that they are equipped with the **resilience and mind-set** to compete and **contribute confidently and compassionately** in a modern, ever changing world. We recognise that the right blend of **knowledge, skills, attributes and qualifications** will provide the foundations for our young people to succeed in life beyond school’*, Balfron High School endorses and promotes the principles:

- every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults
- children and young people and their parents/carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying appropriately
- every child and young person who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available
- adults working with children and young people will follow a consistent and coherent approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early learning and child care onwards.

Balfron High School value cultures where children and young people’s rights are at the forefront; diversity is fostered and respectful relationships, built on mutual trust and understanding, are developed.

This guidance includes an explicit commitment to addressing all forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. It is designed to support young people, staff and parents to be assured that bullying behaviour is not acceptable and therefore addressed in Balfron High School.

Central to this is our work to build capacity, resilience and skills in children and young people, and all those who play a role in their lives, to develop environments where bullying cannot thrive. Underpinning this is Balfron High School’s commitment to prevention, early intervention, valuing and meeting individual needs, in line with the principles of *Getting it Right For Every Child*, in order to achieve responsible inclusion for every child and young person.

What do we mean by Bullying Behaviours?

A Definition

‘Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. 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

Bullying behaviour has a detrimental impact on children and young people physically and emotionally. **An incident may only happen once** but if the **impact** is that it leaves a young person fearful, threatened and/or where it causes perceived loss of control or worthlessness, this is bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour can include (amongst others):

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online.
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked.
- Having belongings taken or damaged.
- Being ignored, left out/having rumours spread about you (face to face and/or online).
- Abusive messages/pictures/images on social media/gaming platforms/phone.
- Controlling behaviours which make people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face to face and/or online), e.g. intimidation, playing on someone's self-esteem, coercion, etc.
- Labelling, e.g. name calling, etc.
- Targeting because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online), e.g. homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, etc.

Please see the Appendix for further explanations and examples.

Sometimes, bullying behaviour has no observable or actual impact on a child/young person. Indeed, the intended recipient may be completely unaffected by the behaviour. However, where the intention is to bully, the behaviour is not ignored, and will be challenged and recorded appropriately. For example, the use of homophobic or other derogatory language may have no impact on the child/young person it is aimed at, but will still be challenged as the language itself is unacceptable and could impact on other people.

Prejudice-based Bullying

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to behaviour and language that could manifest in different ways. In the Scottish legal system, these are referred to as 'hate incidents' and if a crime is then committed, 'hate crimes'. Balfron High School is responsible for ensuring that curricula are designed to include education about all protected characteristics, ensuring that children and young people have the language, understanding and confidence to respond to prejudice-based bullying effectively. For young people, Balfron High School actively facilitates young people's understanding of responsible citizenship and ensures that they are aware of the seriousness and consequences of hate crime.

Prejudice-based bullying includes incidents, which have been motivated by one or more of the *protected characteristics* (below), as well as including other prejudices, which are not listed in the Equality Act 2010.

The protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Other prejudices not listed in the Equality Act 2010:

- Additional Support Needs
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Body Image and Physical Appearance
- Gender Identity
- Gypsy/Travellers
- Intersectionality
- Looked After/Care Experienced Children and Young People
- Sectarianism
- Socio-Economic Prejudice
- Young Carers

In Balfron High School, in addition to recording and monitoring incidents of bullying behaviour on the Bullying and Equalities module on SEEMiS, any incidents of prejudiced-based bullying are recorded on the Corporate Incident Form and forwarded to the ASN and Wellbeing team.

For a young person experiencing online bullying, given that it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night, they may feel that there is no escape. Online bullying behaviour is treated with the same gravity as any other bullying behaviour. Online bullying and the

promotion of safe and responsible use of mobile devices is more effectively addressed when it as part of a cohesive anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy.

When it is not bullying behaviour?

Young people fall out and disagree with each other as a normal part of growing up. Providing young people opportunities to discuss how they feel, helps them develop resilience in managing their relationships. As adults, we have a responsibility to support children and young people to talk about their experiences and challenges, without us leading their thinking and potentially mis-labelling the behaviour. This could escalate a simple fall out to something perceived to be a bullying incident, and adults use a common-sense approach to manage such conversations supportively and sensibly.

Protecting our Young People from Bullying Behaviours

‘Children and young people have a right to be protected from bullying behaviour – a protection that all adults in their lives, regardless of their roles, share a responsibility to provide. ‘

Respectme, 2018

Balfron High School will be proactive in creating, a nurturing culture and positive ethos where bullying behaviours are not tolerated. A culture that listens to young people and concerns are taken seriously. This may include particular approaches such as:-

- Buddying (6,2,1 model) or bespoke mentoring
- Involvement of the Pupil Council
- Anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies and speakers, PSE Curriculum
- Encouraging young people to report incidents by speaking to a trusted member of staff or using the ‘Worry Box’
- Working with Campus Police in delivery of education and in addressing unacceptable/concerning behaviour

Information for Parents

‘As a parent, there are a number of things you can do if your child tells you they're being bullied, which can help them to feel in control again.

Very often, children and young people are reluctant to tell adults that they're being bullied. This might be because they are scared of an over-reaction, they don't want to burden parents if there are other things going on in the family, they're embarrassed, or they are worried that telling might make the situation worse.

But there are a number of things you can look out for if you're concerned your child is being bullied:

Potential signs

- They become withdrawn
- They have scratches and bruises that can't really be explained
- They don't want to go to school or they are having trouble with school work
- They don't want to go out or be with friends
- Their online behaviour changes
- Changes to how and when they're using their mobile
- Changes are made in the route they take to school
- They complain of headaches, stomach aches and other pains

- They become easily upset, tearful, ill-tempered or display other out-of-character behaviour'

'Respectme, 2016'

Further information on how to support your child can be found on the Respectme website.
<https://respectme.org.uk/adults/bullying-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers/>

Reporting bullying behaviour

If a parent has a concern about their child they can contact the following staff:-

- Form Class Leader
- Principal Teacher Home Area
- Principal Teacher Pupil Support
- Depute Headteacher
- Headteacher

Action

The member of staff to whom the incident is reported to, or who has witnessed the incident, will take the incident seriously. They will use their professional judgement in deciding upon appropriate action based on the impact of the bullying behaviour on the young person.

The young person who has **experienced bullying behaviour** will receive appropriate support and protection.

Examples of good practice include:

- That they be treated with respect and that their rights are protected and fulfilled
- They are listened to, and their concerns are taken seriously
- They are gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when and notes taken
- They are asked what they want to happen next
- They are kept up to date with the progress and actions taken
- Details of the bullying behaviour and actions taken, recorded in the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module by Principal Teachers and the Senior Leadership Team
- Details of the bullying behaviour to be discussed at the weekly House meeting
- The member of staff informs parents of the incident and action taken, if it is judged to be appropriate
- Balfron High School will work with parents to address bullying that happens outside of school, if it is judged to be appropriate.

When a young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the leadership/senior leadership team should, based on their professional judgement, endeavour to manage the resolution of the bullying incident within the school. Parents should be involved when their active support is needed to implement a resolution of the bullying incident.

Examples of good practice include:

- Time taken to understand the reasons for the bullying behaviour
- The individual or group should not be labelled as bullies, name the behaviour
- Staff should be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behaviour
- Addressing what is happening behind the behaviour, even when the bullying has stopped.

Consideration should be given to the consequences and support given to the young person displaying the bullying behaviour to ensure that interventions are intended to improve behaviour.

Such approaches might include:

- Positive behaviour strategies with an appropriate member of staff, as agreed
- Restorative approaches
- Involvement of ASN Outreach, Educational Psychologists and Campus Police.

Creating the Right Environment: Promoting Respectful Relationships

Bullying behaviour thrives in environments where respectful relationships are not the norm. Promoting respectful relationships and ensuring we respond to all forms of prejudice helps to create a nurturing and safe climate for our children and young people.

Balfron High School take the following actions to engage young people in learning and thinking around bullying behaviours.

Visual reminders	Posters and badges displaying a visual commitment to equality and diversity
PSE Curriculum	Promoting work on personal safety, bullying and building resilience as part of the PSE curriculum
Assemblies/guest speakers	Promoting school values
Anti-Bullying Campaigns	Acknowledgement of Anti-Bullying week through assemblies and stand-alone lessons during Form Class time.
Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)	Designed to train students to speak out against rape, dating violence, sexual harassment, bullying and all forms of violent and abusive behaviour, MVP focuses on an innovative 'bystander' approach that empowers each student to take an active role in promoting a positive school climate. Within the MVP Programme young people are identified not as victims or perpetrators but as empowered bystanders able to support and even challenge abusive and bullying peers. Young people are provided with a range of safe options which can prevent situations from escalating
Pupil Council Meetings	Representatives from each year group meet with the Head Prefects/Depute Headteacher to discuss key issues
School House System	Each child identifies with a House and has a Form Class Leader for or PT Pupil Support for help, guidance and pastoral support
Extracurricular activities	Extracurricular activities build positive relationships
Nurture spaces/groups	Nurture is one such intervention which highlights relationships and a structured approach to working with this group of young people
Library – Mental Health Hub	Providing a safe space for young people and reading materials to support mental health

Recording and Monitoring Bullying Incidents

Accurate recording of bullying incidents helps to ensure that an appropriate response has taken place. Recording will also support us to monitor the effectiveness of our anti-bullying guidance and practice and support us to review and update as appropriate.

Monitoring helps services identify recurring patterns thereby encouraging early intervention. Recording systems will include information on:

- The children and young people involved, as well as staff or other adults
- Where and when bullying has taken place
- The type of bullying experienced, e.g. name-calling, rumours, threats etc.
- Any underlying prejudice including details of any protected characteristic(s)
- Consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns and
- Actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

Balfron High School will record and monitor incidents using the Bullying & Equalities module on SEEMiS. The incidents will be reviewed on a termly basis by the Depute Headteacher responsible for the Bullying & Equalities module.

Supporting Self-Evaluation of Policy and Practice

'An anti-bullying policy provides consistency in process, action and practice. Any member of staff, parent, child or young person should be able to read a policy and know what they can expect and also what is expected of them. Policy development is a journey, a values based journey to create environments where bullying does not thrive.' Respectme, 2018

Balfron High School in consultation with young people, parents and staff will regularly review, update and publish their approach to Respect for All.

To begin this process, the following questions can be asked:

- Does Balfron High School have a current bullying behaviours policy which reflects messages in Stirling Council's guidance and the national policy, 'Respect for All – A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People'?
- How well could relevant stakeholders be involved in the policy development?
- To what extent does Balfron High School – including young people and their families – have ownership of the vision, aims and values of the policy?
- What is the plan and timescale for developing/refreshing the policy?

In developing the policy, consideration can be given to self-evaluation of:

- Whole-school training/involvement
- Culture and practice
- Parental/family engagement
- Recording, monitoring, continuous improvement and learning
- Response, support and the voice of young people.

Appendix:

It would be helpful for an expanded definition and examples of bullying for certain characteristics. This is not an exhaustive list.

Racial

Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, deliberate physical attacks. It can be identified by the fact that victims are singled out because of the colour of their skin, the way they speak, ethnic grouping or religious or cultural practices. Sectarianism may also be included here.

Sexism and Gender Based

Bullying in the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour. 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.

Unwanted physical contact, which may be considered as assault, or sexually abusive/suggestive comments.

Gender identity and transphobic bullying

The term 'transgender' is an umbrella-term for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as 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, such as transphobic and homophobic name calling or 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.

Sexual Orientation

Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

Children and young people do not necessarily have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young

people perceived to be LGB; those that do not conform to gender norms; and those who have gay friends or family. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.