



Broughton Learning Community

Anti-Bullying and Equalities Policy 2021-24



Stockbridge Primary and Nursery

The following policy reflects the shared commitment of the Broughton Learning Community which is comprised of: Broughton High School, Granton Primary, Flora Stevenson Primary, Ferryhill Primary, Stockbridge Primary. It has been produced in consultation with staff, parent and pupil groups, including our Pupil Council, Equalities groups and Parent Councils.

City of Edinburgh Council is strongly committed to providing a safe environment for all people in its educational establishments. We are committed to ensuring positive relationships. Bullying, prejudice and discrimination are never acceptable and children, young people and staff have the right to learn and work in a safe, fair and secure environment.

This school policy follows the City of Edinburgh Council's Communities and Families Procedure on 'Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People' (2020) which is based on '*Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People*'.

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Anti-Bullying and Equalities Policy and Procedures 2021-24

The emotional health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff is essential for our children to have the best start to life and to have successful life chances. We are committed to developing positive relationships between all in the school community, children, young people, staff and parents. Our core practices are the 4 Rs: Relationships, Rights Respecting, Resilience, Restorative.

We are a Rights Respecting Cluster.

This procedure covers the following articles of the UNCRC:

- Article 2 – You have the right to protection against discrimination.
- Article 12 - The right to a voice. Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and have their opinions taken into account.
- Article 19 – You have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.
- Article 29 – You have the right to an education which develops your personality and your respect for other's rights and the environment.

Our Values and Beliefs

The Stockbridge Primary School values are:
Ready Respectful Safe

All pupils and staff have the right to feel respected, happy, safe, and included. The Broughton High Cluster supports every young person to achieve and attain their very best.

Our shared values of **respect, integrity and inclusion** and high expectations of success within a caring and supportive environment form the basis of our positive ethos. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals, respect individuality and celebrate diversity.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination. We challenge inequality and promote tolerance through our inclusive, nurturing environments.

We recognise the effects that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can have on a child or young person's feelings of worth, on their health and wellbeing and on their school-work.

We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals. We use restorative approaches to repair and strengthen relationships between staff and pupils within our whole school community. (Appendix to be added containing further information)

We provide opportunities for success through a variety of curricular and extra-curricular options and pathways. We encourage creativity and support our young people to build the skills and resilience they need for the future.

We have the courage to aspire to the very best we can be. We belong to our school and we are very proud of our tradition and heritage.

Definitions

What do we mean by bullying?

"Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as 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)

Bullying behaviour is a more useful phrase than 'bully'. The term bully labels an individual with a fixed trait, whereas bullying behaviour can be transient and temporary and can be changed/corrected.

Bullying behaviours can take many forms. Examples of bullying behaviours include:

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening.
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours.
- Hitting, tripping, kicking.
- Taking and damaging belongings
- Sending an abusive text, email or instant message, or posting an abusive comment on a social networking site (online or cyber-bullying).
- Targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be.

Person being bullied/picked on/isolated or person on the receiving end of bullying behaviour are more useful phrases than 'victim'. The label victim can be disempowering. The term victim labels an individual with a fixed trait whereas bullying experiences can be temporary. There can also be a complex interplay between those involved and there may not be a clear beginning and end.

Online bullying or cyberbullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through email, messaging, social networking websites or online gaming and should be taken as seriously as any other form of bullying.

What is not bullying behaviour?

"You don't have to like me...agree with me...or enjoy the same things I do. But you do have to respect me." (respectme, 2018). In order to work effectively, positively and diligently to prevent and respond to all forms of bullying and allegations of bullying behaviour, it is important to distinguish between what is and is not bullying behaviour.

Anyone can make a mistake or behave in a way that is inappropriate but not every action that has a negative impact on someone else is 'bullying behaviour'. Part of our responsibility and duty is to support our children and young people to develop resilience. We cannot condone the overuse or misuse of the term 'bullying' or react disproportionately to children and young people's behaviours. To do so would be counterproductive.

We know that children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of development and most children and young people have the ability to bounce back from these experiences. It is important to discuss how they feel and help them to develop resilience to manage their relationships. This is in line with guidance from respectme. *"We should always remember that children will tease each other, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and disagree about what they like and don't like. This is a normal part of growing up and should be distinguished from bullying. However, in an environment where this behaviour is left unchecked, it can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feel afraid, uncomfortable and unsafe in their environment."* (respectme, 2018).

Furthermore, bullying behaviour can sometimes be unsuccessful as bullying behaviours can sometimes have no impact. In this case the person the behaviours were directed at has not been bullied but the behaviour still needs to be challenged appropriately and should not be ignored. For example, the use of homophobic or prejudicial language, which may have no impact on the person it is aimed at, must still be challenged, as the language itself is unacceptable and could affect other people.

respectme state "Bullying can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration. If you are unsure if behaviour is bullying, look at the effect it is having on the child or young person. If they are unable to respond effectively and regain their sense of self and control in the situation, adults need to intervene to help restore it. Keeping the focus on impact reduces the emphasis on issues of persistence and intent. What you do about bullying is more important than how you define it." (2018)

Incidents may be perceived as bullying when they are, in fact, criminal in nature. It is important to ensure that criminal offences such as hate crime, child sexual exploitation and gender-based violence are clearly distinguished from bullying. For example, when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying. It is sexual assault, sexual abuse or

gender-based violence. There are laws to protect children and young people from this very serious behaviour.

Discrimination, Prejudice-based Bullying and the Equality Act 2010

Bullying behaviour can often be rooted in prejudice and discrimination due to difference or a perceived difference. We are committed to challenging discrimination, prejudice-based bullying and language, and to fulfilling our duty under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination to any of the nine protected characteristics: **disability; race; sex ; pregnancy/maternity; religion/belief; sexual orientation; gender re-assignment; age; marriage/civil partnership**

Note: In relation to the education of children and young people, the protected characteristics of age, marriage and civil partnership are not included.

We recognise that children and young people can also experience bullying in relation to: asylum seeker or refugee status; body image; being care experienced; social or economic status; young carer responsibilities; imprisonment of parents/carers, siblings, other family members, family structure, academic abilities, personal circumstances, health, appearance and physical abilities.

We recognise that children and young people can experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination because of any of these individual factors or a combination of factors.

Hate incident or hate crime

A bullying incident is a hate incident if the victim or anyone else thinks it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. If the incident is a criminal offence and the offender targeted the victim because of their prejudice or hostility based on any of these characteristics, this is a hate crime. All hate crimes should be reported to Police Scotland through the School Link Officer. In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of staff / Equality Co-ordinator should seek advice from the School Link Officer.

Additional support needs

Every child gets help in school with their learning and development. As part of our commitment to inclusion, schools and services maintain effective arrangements to make reasonable adjustments to ensure the widest range of individual needs are met as a natural part of what we do on a day-to-day basis. This includes planning to meet children's needs, collaborative working, tracking children's progress, identifying any barriers to learning, helping children with any difficulties that arise, including those experienced by highly able pupils, communicating with parents/carers and supporting transitions. A child has additional support needs if they need more, or different, support to what is normally provided in schools to children of the same age. Some children may need a lot of support all through school. Others may need only a small amount of additional support for a short time. Children with additional support needs may be at risk of experiencing bullying or discrimination and conversely children who are bullied are likely to develop additional support needs.

Responsibilities and Reporting bullying, prejudice and discrimination incidents

Headteachers are:

- responsible for the introduction and implementation of this procedure. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents/carers must play an active part in following the guidance and putting it into practice. Teachers and support staff are expected to be pro-active, to treat all allegations seriously and to refer reports of incidents to the Equalities Co-ordinator / designated member of the senior leadership team. The incident is recorded accurately with future actions detailed.

The Head Teacher is required to:

- ensure that all allegations are reported and recorded rigorously
- monitor SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module reports regularly, at least termly
- monitor and report annually on the implementation of this procedure
- supervise the review and updating of this procedure at least every three years
- share key themes and specific allegations with the Equalities co-ordinator as appropriate to ensure robust measures are in place

Pupils are asked to:

- report all incidents and suspected incidents of any type of bullying, discrimination or prejudice that they experience to a member of staff
- report all incidents and suspected incidents of bullying, discrimination and prejudice that they see to a member of staff
- support each other and to seek help from a member of staff, to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.
- if they don't feel able to speak to a member of staff, they could speak to a Trusted Adult, or contact an external organisation for advice and support, e.g. [Childline](#), [LGBT Youth Scotland](#) or [ELREC](#).

All school staff are required to:

- be pro-active in implementing the procedure
- treat all allegations and observation of bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour or language seriously
- seek to address incidents, where appropriate
- record any incidents on a Bullying and prejudice incident form or a Wellbeing Concern form and inform a member of SLT and/or Equalities Co-ordinator of all incidents

Parents/carers are asked to:

- be aware of *respectme*, Scotland's Anti-bullying Service booklet – Bullying Behaviour: A Guide for Parents and Carers ([available at http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/](http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/))
- work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying, discrimination and prejudice cannot thrive
- speak to any member of staff (the class teacher, PSA or member of senior leadership team) if they have any concerns about bullying, discrimination and prejudice experienced by their child or by another child / children at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter
- encourage their children to be positive members of our school community
- monitor closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet and to intervene if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately.
- understand that we seek to understand the experiences and address the needs of all children and young people who experience bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour as well as those who present bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour. We do this within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.
- speak to the Head Teacher if their concerns continue following initial intervention
- be aware that they can contact a relevant external organisation for advice and support
- be aware of the school's complaints procedure and the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service and their rights with regard to these procedures.

Promotion of Equality

Through the Curriculum for Excellence, we deliver an inclusive curriculum to:

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities as responsible citizens.
- Challenge stereotypes, bias and discrimination, including prejudice-based attitudes and language
- Teach Critical Literacy

- Provide age-appropriate reading materials and resources that positively reflect and represent diversity, e.g. family structures that include single parents, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, same-sex parents.
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals.
- Raise awareness about bullying and our Anti-Bullying Procedure across a range of school subjects.

Prevention

By promoting a positive school ethos, with a focus on rights, equalities and health and wellbeing, we hope to prevent bullying, prejudice and discrimination happening. For example

- We use posters and school display screens to remind pupils that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable and what to do if they or someone they know is being bullied or experiencing prejudice.
- Our Equalities group actively supports the school's work on prevention of bullying, prejudice and discrimination.
- Bullying, prejudice and discrimination and other equality-related issues are a standing item on the SLT meetings, staff meetings and our Pupil Council agenda.
- We carry out surveys and focus groups to evaluate ethos and health and wellbeing in the school.
- The school holds diversity and anti-bullying events to raise the profile of these issues. For example, during Anti-bullying Week we hold events to raise awareness of what bullying looks like, how we can prevent it and what supports are available for pupils who experience bullying. We also hold anti-bullying assemblies and discuss bullying in Health & Wellbeing time.
- The Rights Respecting School group ensure that all the pupils are aware of and learn about their human rights through lessons, events, assemblies and displays. The Rights-Respecting values are being embedded in the school and so pupils are being empowered to become more active citizens and learners.
- We work with other agencies and partners in health, police and the voluntary sector to promote a positive ethos. This includes working with organisations such as *respectme*, NSPCC, and resources including Building Resilience, Zones of Regulation, Emotion Talk Tool and Circle of Friends.
- Our staff engage with professional learning to increase their awareness and understanding of all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination as well as to develop skills in restorative practice.

Support

How we support pupils who are bullied or experience prejudice and discrimination

We listen to the child or young person

- We reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling.
- We encourage them to talk about how they feel, find out what happened and who was involved
- We involve them in making choices about how the matter could be resolved.
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We follow a restorative approach
- We ask them to report any further incidents to us straight away.
- We affirm that the bullying behaviour can be stopped and that we will persist with interventions to achieve a satisfactory conclusion.
- We say clearly what will happen next and that we will update them on progress.
- When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check that bullying behaviour has not started again.

What happens next?

- The teacher or member of staff who receives the report will record the incident on a Bullying and prejudice incident form or Wellbeing Concern form and discuss the next steps with the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator.
- At all times, child protection procedures and/or Risk Management procedures should be followed, if necessary.
- In most cases, further investigation will be carried out by a member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator
- Further investigation may involve:
 - Speaking with the children or young people involved, preserving confidentiality.
 - Speaking with children or young people or others who witnessed the incident, preserving confidentiality.
 - Speaking with parents (*after consultation with the child or young person*)
 - Seeking advice from partner services and relevant organisations
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime) a designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will report this to Police Scotland.
- In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of the senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will seek advice from Police Scotland.
- If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has taken place, we will take appropriate and proportionate action (see examples of possible actions below)
- If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has not taken place, we will speak with the child or young person who reported the incident and offer further support if needed.
- At all times, we will update the child or young person who reported bullying, prejudice or discrimination.

Our work with pupils who bully others or present prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes / behaviour

A child or young person who is bullying someone else may not be doing this consciously, but the impact of bullying, prejudice or discrimination is still felt and this is taken seriously. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or present prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes / behaviour will be treated fairly and consistently using actions that are proportionate and appropriate to the age and stage of the child and to the incident (see below).

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in the incident separately.
- We listen to their version of events and take time to discover the reasons for the behaviour.
- We talk to anyone who may have witnessed the incident.
- We reinforce the message that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop.
- We address prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes that may be behind the behaviour
- We seek a commitment to stop bullying.
- We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they feel they are being bullied.
- We consider consequences under our school's Positive Relationships Procedure.
- We consider what support the pupil needs and whether other referrals are required, e.g. educational psychologist, youth worker or counsellor.
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime) we report this to Police Scotland directly or via Community Police officer.
- In the case of hate incidents, we seek advice from Police Scotland.
- We advise pupils responsible for bullying, prejudice or discrimination that we check to ensure that the behaviour stops.
- We contact the parents of the pupil(s) at an early stage.
- We follow a restorative approach
- We follow up after incidents to check that the bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour has not started again in any form.

Some examples of our actions

- Physical separation of person/people presenting bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour, where necessary and possible.
- De-escalation strategies.
- Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances and conflict resolution.
- Involvement of a parent/carer where appropriate.
- Peer mentoring and mediation.
- Use of a nurture space and establish relationship with PSO to increase confidence and provide support.
- Consequences, following our Positive Relationships Policy.
- Assessment of additional support needs, including counselling, for the person being bullied or experiencing prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour or for the person who is bullying or displaying prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour.
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector.
- Referral to specific support service, such as Psychological Services, Education Welfare Service, Social Work or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Note: Exclusion from school is not itself a sanction or punishment for bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour and would only be used in specific circumstances and as a last resort.

Online bullying and bullying outside the school premises

We know that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The behaviour may be presented by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent informs us of bullying, prejudice or discrimination out with the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle these incidents outside of school.
- Talk to the Head Teacher of any other school(s) whose pupils are allegedly presenting bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour.
- Talk to the police, if appropriate.
- Talk to parents about the behaviour of their young people.

Follow-up

When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check with the child or young person that bullying has not started again.

Recording and Monitoring Bullying Incidents

The designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will support the recording of all incidents in the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMiS.

The following information is recorded:

- the person experiencing the behaviour
- the person displaying the behaviour
- the nature and category of the incident
- the perceived reason(s) for bullying
- actions already taken and future actions
- conclusion (being addressed, resolved, not resolved, unfounded)

All reported incidents should be recorded. Records should include whether the incident is bullying, and/or prejudice-based and the nature of this. If there is any dispute or doubt (on the part of any individual) about whether the incident was or was not bullying or prejudice, the incident and the doubts should be recorded.

The designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will:

- ensure that this procedure is implemented.
- monitor SEEMiS reports on regular basis, at least termly.

Records of bullying, discrimination and prejudice-based incidents will be collected centrally from SEEMiS by the local authority from August 2020 on a termly basis.

COMMUNICATING THIS PROCEDURE

We promote our anti-bullying procedure throughout the session and we publicise this procedure on our individual school websites. Information is on display around the school advising pupils on how they can report bullying, discrimination and prejudice, or seek confidential help.

The procedure is also reinforced through Health and Wellbeing classes and assemblies.

CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK

We recognise that there may be times when pupils or parents/carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying, discrimination and prejudice or a wider community issue. If a pupil or parent/carer feels that an incident/issue has not been fully resolved to their satisfaction, we ask them to contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents/carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then parents/carers can use the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service. We are also pleased to receive positive feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well.

At any time, a pupil or parent/carer can seek advice and support from an external organisation.

EVALUATING AND REVIEWING OUR PROCEDURE

We evaluate the effectiveness of this procedure on an annual basis using a variety of measures which include:

- Reviewing the number of incidents that are reported alongside the attendance, exclusions, attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups.
- Sharing the number of incident reports with Pupil Council and/or our Equalities group.
- Reviewing periodically Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying through questionnaires and focus groups.
- Feedback received from parents/carers.

The procedure is reviewed formally every 3 years.



Parents and Carers Guide

August 2023

What do I do if my child tells me they are experiencing bullying?

Never worry about getting in touch with school

1. Talk to your child about what has happened. Find out as much as you can.
2. Have a look at the *respectme* website <https://respectme.org.uk/> for further information. There are also links to specific pages on the school website.
3. Contact a member of the school/your child's teacher to share your concerns. At Stockbridge we treat all concerns seriously and in confidence. You can email the school admin@stockbridge.edin.sch.uk, write a letter or phone the office **0131 332 6109**. You will receive confirmation that it has been passed to a member of staff. Please do not email teachers directly as they will be teaching.
4. The Depute Headteacher (DHT), the Headteacher (HT), the Class Teacher (CT) or the Pupil Support Officer (PSO) may gather information from your child, other children involved and ask staff what they have seen. If you wish for staff to speak with you before we talk to your child, please let us know as part of your initial contact with school. A member of our team will get back to you to explain what they have found out and agree the next steps with you. This will normally be within 5 working days from the confirmation of receipt via email, letter or phone call.
5. The DHT, HT or CT will work with the children involved to stop bullying or prejudiced behaviour in school and will check-in with you and your child to see if you feel this has been resolved. A date will be agreed with you to check in on how things are going.
6. Please note that school staff will be following the Stockbridge Anti-Bullying and Equalities Policy. You can find a copy of this here:

<https://stockbridgeprimaryschool.wordpress.com/promoting-equality-celebrating-diversity/>



Stockbridge Pupil Guide to Our Anti-Bullying and Equalities Policy 2021-2024

Our Values and beliefs

Safe Respectful Ready



What do we mean by Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?

Equality is about ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities in life. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. (equalityhumanrights 2018)

Diversity is about celebrating and respecting the differences between people.

It's important that people from all backgrounds feel both valued and **included**. An inclusive nursery and school should have a culture which makes **everyone feel welcome**.



What do we mean by bullying?

“Bullying is both behaviour and impact...it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This happens face to face and online. Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally” (respectme, 2015)



What are bullying behaviours?

Bullying behaviours can include –

- Name calling, teasing, putting down and threatening.
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours.



- Hitting, tripping and kicking.
- Taking and damaging belongings.
- Sending an abusive text, email or instant message or posting an abusive message on a social networking site.
- Picking on someone because of their disability, gender (sexism), race, ethnicity or nationality, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation. This is called 'prejudice based bullying'.
- Targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be

The UNCRC Article 2 says 'you have the right to be protected from discrimination'.

Article 12 says 'The right to a voice. Children have the right to say what they think should happen.'

Article 19 says 'you have the right to be protected from being hurt in body and mind'.



"You don't have to like me...agree with me...or enjoy the same things I do. But you do have to respect me." (respectme, 2018).

How can bullying make you feel?

- Helpless
- Frightened
- Confused
- Anxious/worried (possibly not wanting to come to school)
- Threatened

Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is doesn't mean it's not bullying.

What should I do if I think I'm being bullied or see bullying behaviour?

- You need to tell a trusted adult. This could be a teacher, PSA or an adult at home.
- You could leave a note in your class worry box/notes to a teacher box.

What will happen if I tell someone?

- A staff member will speak to you to find out about how you feel, what happened and who was involved. You have done the right thing.
- They might ask you to write it down.



- They will ask you what you think should happen next and discuss with you how to keep safe.
- They will tell you what will happen next
- A staff member will talk with the pupils involved separately and listen to all versions of events
- They will talk with anyone who may have witnessed the incident
- They will speak to your parents/carers
- If we find bullying has taken place, we will take action to stop it happening (see below).

What actions will be taken to stop the bullying behaviour?

We will contact the parents/carers of the pupils involved

We will tell the person displaying the bullying behaviour that it is unacceptable and we expect it to stop.

If they have displayed prejudice based bullying we will work with them to help them to understand why this is wrong.

We will ask them to agree that the behaviour will stop and discuss how we will monitor this.

We will seek an apology and try to help them to understand the harm/hurt they have caused. We call this a restorative discussion.

We will consider if the child displaying the bullying behaviour needs a consequence outlined in our Positive Relationships Policy.

We will discuss with you any supports you might need.

We will discuss with the person displaying the behaviour if they need any further support to help stop them from repeating the behaviour.

We will keep a record of the incidents and ask you to let us know if you feel it has been resolved.

We will keep your parents updated.

We will agree a time that we will check in with you that the bullying behaviour has stopped and will take further action if it has not.

Created by the Stockbridge Pupil Equalities Group, 2023



<https://respectme.org.uk/>

Bullying... A guide for parents and carers

If your child tells you they are being bullied, there are a number of things you can do to help them feel in control again.

Dealing with bullying behaviour

Very often, children and young people are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied. They might be:

- scared of an over-reaction.
- worried about burdening their parents.
- embarrassed.
- worried that telling someone might make the situation worse.

With this in mind, there are a number of potential signs to look out for if you are concerned your child is being bullied. A child or young person may:

- become withdrawn.
- have unexplained scratches and bruises.
- have trouble with school work or not want to go to school.
- change their route to school.
- not want to go out or play with their friends.
- change their use of online and/or mobile technology.
- complain of headaches, stomach aches and other pains.
- become easily upset, tearful, ill-tempered or display other out-of-character behaviour.

The above list is by no means exhaustive, and the presence of the above symptoms does not necessarily indicate that your child is being bullied, however, as a parent or carer you may be in the best position to recognise an unexplained change in behaviour that needs to be explored.

What should you do?

Bullying takes away a person's ability to feel in control and to take effective action: what we call our *agency*.

Responses to bullying must focus on helping a person to regain their feelings of

being in control and to feel themselves again. Children and young people can feel powerless in bullying situations, so it is important that they are given the opportunity to inform the response. This allows us to find out what they want to happen, what they are worried about happening, and what pace they would like the response to go at.

Listen

Effective listening helps us understand how young people are being affected and what we can do to help. We must listen carefully to what children and young people are saying **and** how they are saying it. You can learn a lot by paying attention to body language and facial expressions.

Pay attention to changing behaviour

'Active' listening is also about responding appropriately to what your child is communicating. They may be reluctant to verbally tell you that they are being bullied but might display subtle cues, such as becoming withdrawn. Noticing this change and taking time to ask your child how they are can make it easier for them to tell you about the bullying.

Things to remember

Don't

panic

Remaining calm supports good listening and is reassuring for your child.

Give them your full attention

This shows a child or young person that you are taking them seriously.

Be clear in your response

Clearly explain the reasons for your concern and feed back sensitively what you have noticed. This will allow your child to see more clearly how the bullying is impacting on them.

Talk to them about online safety

Establish a clear understanding of the platforms they use, how they access them and the safety precautions they can put in place to control their own online environment.

Ask them what they want you to do

Exploring this will make your child feel valued and will help you to understand what support they need.

Keep listening

If they are reluctant to talk straight away, remind them that you are always available to listen and they can talk to you at any time.

How to explore options together

When a parent or carer hears that their child is being bullied, it can evoke an understandably emotional response and sometimes the advice we give at this time is not necessarily the best advice.

Children and young people tell us that being told to *'hit them back'* is a common response. This is not necessarily the safest option and does not take into account those who are unable to do so.

There is not one uniform answer when it comes to bullying. You should ask your child what they want to happen, what, if anything, they have tried so far, and what the consequences of potential solutions might be. For example, *'What would happen if I spoke to the school?'* or *'What do you think would happen if I spoke to someone's mum?'*

Exploring different options may tease out the best solution. If your discussions do not come up with a satisfactory solution, explain to your child why you are worried, why you are going to take a specific response, and how they can work with you during it.

How to help young people cope

Help your child to think about some realistic options to address the behaviour. Some may be able to react to bullying behaviour by using a clever comeback, some may prefer to write things down to process their feelings, others will feel better simply for having told someone.

Children and young people can be reluctant to worry a parent or carer, and may not want to risk an over-reaction. However, it is important they know they have someone to talk to. If you are concerned about bullying, remind your child of their network of support – brothers, cousins, aunties, teachers etc. They can also call [Childline on 0800 1111](https://www.childline.gov.uk) to speak to someone in confidence.

Things to remember

Consider your child's input.

It can be tempting to takeover the situation, but we should always pause to think *'How do I give my child back a sense of being in control?'*

A child may feel bullied even if they haven't been.

For example, they may not have been invited to a party because the numbers were limited. We should still respond to how they feel, even if the situation does not need 'a solution'.

A child may experience bullying behaviour but not feel bullied themselves. For example, someone shouts a homophobic slur but the recipient is not bothered. This behaviour is still unacceptable and needs to be addressed.

You might find it useful to direct children and young people to [further information and advice](#).

Sharing your concerns around bullying

Approaching a school or other organisation about a bullying incident can be daunting, but remember it is in their best interests to help you resolve the situation.

Make an appointment to speak to the head teacher, senior youth worker or another adult your child feels comfortable with.

Calmly explain to them what has been happening - this will be made easier if you have details of when the incidents have taken place – then discuss what you would like to happen next and how you can proceed together.

A school or organisation should not suggest that the bullying is your child's fault. They should not suggest changing classes or moving schools as a solution, nor should they claim that the bullying is not their responsibility because it happened online.

Children and young people open up to those they believe can or will help them. Adults in school or youth work settings must respond in a supportive way.

Don't expect the situation to be fully resolved at the first meeting.

Schools and other organisations often employ a variety of methods to prevent and tackle bullying; some will have an immediate effect, others may take longer. They will also need time to investigate the incident(s).

Don't expect the person(s) involved to be automatically excluded.

Exclusion alone will rarely change bullying behaviour and schools are likely to employ other options.

Agree a plan of action.

At the first meeting, agree a plan of action going forward and set a date to meet again to review the situation. It can be helpful to keep in touch with the school or organisation, but important to remember that keeping the relationship positive will be more beneficial to all parties in the long run.

Ask for a copy of their anti-bullying policy.

All schools and local authorities should have one, so you should ask to see both. Individual services and youth groups should also have one, as should the organisation they belong to.

Familiarise yourself with the national policy.

Scotland's national anti-bullying policy, '[Respect for All](#)' sets out the approach people across Scotland should be taking to anti-bullying work and how bullying behaviour will be dealt with if it occurs.

If you have time, it would be useful to get a copy of the policy before your initial meeting with a school or organisation so you can familiarise yourself with these practices.

Be tactful and careful when talking to others.

If the bullying is happening in the community, you may need to talk to a neighbour or parent. It is important to keep the channels of communication open and remember your child will probably want the situation to be resolved with minimum fuss.