

Oxgang Primary School



Anti-Bullying Guidelines

'Respect for All has a fundamental role to play in helping us realise our vision for all children and young people. It provides a holistic framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. Respect for All reflects Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and recognises that bullying impacts on wellbeing. In order to thrive and achieve their full potential, children and young people need learning environments which are safe, nurturing, respectful and free from fear, abuse and discrimination.'

Scottish Government (2017) – Respect for All: A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People.

Work Hard  Be Respectful  Believe in Yourself 

Rationale

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers of Oxgang Primary School on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (2015, updated February 2020).

Aims

The aims of Oxgang Primary School's Guidelines are to ensure:

- that all children and young people are provided with a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which to learn;
- children and young people, parents and carers and staff have a robust understanding of what bullying behaviour is and the action which will be taken when it is witnessed or reported.
- a culture is promoted where bullying is recognised as being unacceptable;
- the prevention of bullying of children and young people through a range of approaches;
- effective support for children and young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is a combination of behaviours and impacts that can affect someone's ability to feel in control of themselves; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be kept up over time, by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, hitting or hurting or the fear of these.

Bullying also occurs in the virtual world which children and young people access through the Internet, via social networking (eg Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat), computers and mobile phones. As communication can happen anywhere and at any time, often unsupervised, on-line bullying can be very pervasive and difficult to handle. However, in essence, the behaviour is the same and requires similar prevention methods. *Bullying – A Guide for Parents and Carers*, which includes guidance on on-line bullying, is available from 'respectme' – Scotland's Anti-bullying Service on their website - www.respectme.org.uk.

Bullying behaviour may be related to prejudice-based attitudes and behaviours which may compound other differences or difficulties in a child or young person's life. These include:

- homophobic bullying;
- racist bullying;
- ASN/disablist bullying;
- body image;
- religion and belief;
- sexism and gender;
- looked after children and young people;
- care experienced
- gender or trans identity
- socio-economic group.

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

Oxgang Primary School is committed to current definitions that take account of the context in which the event took place and the impact on the person who feels harm has been done to them. It is considered unhelpful to define bullying purely in terms of behaviours alone.

It is important to have clarity about these significant events and be able to recognise and acknowledge bullying behaviours when they happen.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening and intimidating by making prejudiced-based remarks;
- hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking;
- stealing and damaging belongings;
- ignoring, excluding, spreading rumours;
- sending abusive messages electronically, eg via text, emails or social media sites;
- making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied;
- targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be.

This list is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours that could impact negatively on a child's wellbeing.

It is crucial to take into account the impact that bullying behaviour has on a child or young person. **The impact an incident has on a child or young person is more important than whether it is classified as bullying.** Actions can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration. The person who has experienced harm may have experienced just one event. **The impact determines the definition of bullying.** One incident is sufficient to alert adults to take supportive action.

Prevention of Bullying

Oxgang Primary School will work to create a positive and supportive ethos. A culture that encourages respect, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes positive relationships will make it difficult for bullying behaviour to occur or be tolerated. This may include particular approaches such as:

- use of school vision and values to promote respect and tolerance
- buddying or mentoring;
- using the Risk Matrix/ PSG/ other system to identify vulnerable pupils and takes steps to remedy this;
- creative and motivational ways to engage pupils and raise awareness of bullying with theatre groups, speakers, film footage and music;
- involvement of the Pupil Council;
- anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies;
- Focus on anti-bullying message delivered through the school RME and Health and Wellbeing programmes
- encouraging pupils to report bullying incidents using 'worry' boxes
- areas of special focus eg prevention of name calling;
- an understanding of the impact and legal consequences of on-line bullying, supported by campus police, for the whole school community through the curriculum, assemblies and events for parents and carers.

Action

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

The child or young person who has **experienced bullying behaviour** will receive appropriate support and protection. This may be from a member of the Senior Management Team or it may be another member of staff who will be released to have time to talk with the child.

Examples of good practice include:

- the child or young person is taken to a comfortable place with no distractions;
- the child or young person is listened to;
- the member of staff should confirm that bullying is never acceptable; they deserve to feel safe;
- they should be gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken;
- they should be asked what they want to see happen next;
- the child or young person should be kept up to date with progress;
- details of the bullying behaviour and actions taken is recorded in the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module;
- the member of staff should inform parents of the incident and action taken, if it is judged to be appropriate.

When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the management 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 should be 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 for a strong reaction from parents and carers, children and young people;
- 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 sanctions and support given to the young person displaying 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;
- solution orientated approaches;
- involvement of educational psychologists and campus police.

However, 'where it is considered that in all circumstances to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline or the educational wellbeing of the pupils there' (*national guidance on the prevention and management of exclusions, Included, Engaged and Involved-Part 2* (June 2017), senior managers have the power to exclude as a last resort.

Communicating Awareness

In order to tackle the issue of bullying it is essential that **everyone within the community** is aware that **bullying is never acceptable** and what action should be taken if they are subject to, or witness, what might be a bullying incident. In Oxbang Primary School and we aim to achieve this by:

- maintaining a regular focus on our school values and vision statement and our behaviour blueprint to help the whole school community respect the rights of everyone.
- **supporting** anti-bullying projects and nurturing a positive ethos of **respect for all**;
- **promoting** work on **personal safety and bullying** as part of the **RME and Health and Wellbeing** curriculum;
- **encouraging** the development of environments in which **children and young people** can feel free of bullying and can **thrive**;
- **providing support** in individual circumstances.

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

If you are being bullied or witness someone else being bullied it is very important that you take action - ignoring it can often mean it will get worse.

Steps you can take include:

- Report it to a member of the school staff (office or senior management team)
- Speak to admin staff (school office) and make an appointment to speak to the Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher, explaining you have a bullying concern

- Speak to your child's class teacher

What will we do when you tell us?

Steps we will take will include:

- Speak to all parties involved, taking time to listen and ensure pupil(s) feel safe
- Discuss incident(s) with all parents and outline next steps
- Monitor the situation over an agreed period of time and plan check in's to see how restorative measures have progressed
- Record the incident on the SEEMIS system as outlined in the EDC Procedure Manual 3.34 – Anti Bullying policy.

Review of Guidelines

Anti-Bullying Guidelines will be reviewed during session 2022-2023.