

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Banchory Primary School  
August 2022

Date	Version	Status	Reason for update
August 2021	1	New policy	School specific policy required.
August 2022	2	Updated school policy	Addition of an updates section at the beginning of the policy in line with updates of all policies showing transparency of updates and reviews

### Rationale:

Banchory Primary School is committed to creating and sustaining a safe, caring, positive and supportive environment for all. We believe that all pupils have the right to be protected from bullying. We work together to provide a positive school ethos where everyone feels secure and valued and where we have respect for ourselves and others. Bullying in any form is intolerable and unacceptable. **We take all incidents of bullying seriously.**

Parents/carers, pupils and teachers have a responsibility to work together to maintain an environment free from bullying behaviour. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour and encourage others to do the same.

At Banchory Primary School we value positive relationships. This policy has been drawn up within the school's ethos of promoting positive behaviour and should be read alongside our Positive Relationships Policy focussed on the "Banchory Bees".

This policy has considered the Aberdeenshire 'Anti-Bullying Policy for Learning Establishments 2015' and the 'Anti-Bullying Guidance for Learning Establishments 2015'. It has been founded within the aims and principles of 'A Curriculum for Excellence' and 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC)

Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that apply to this policy:

- "The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children." (UNCRC Article 3)
- "Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them." (UNCRC Article 19)
- "Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment." (UNCRC Article 29)
- "All children have a right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities." (UNCRC Article 31)

We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is encouraged to tell the staff.

At Banchory Primary School, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time. When it does occur, pupils should feel supported and comfortable to be able to seek help in the knowledge that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Where instances of bullying occur, all parties involved are treated in a fair and supportive manner.

#### Aims:

- To create a comfortable and safe learning environment for pupils
- To support pupils to understand the impact that bullying can have.
- To support pupils to be empathetic to others and their feelings
- To ensure that cases of bullying are dealt with constructively and fairly to all those involved
- To promote an atmosphere of trust.
- To ensure the accepted practice for pupils is to report and discuss incidents of bullying.
- To reduce the number of pupils who experience bullying by increasing their awareness of bullying behaviour, its causes, impact, and consequences.
- To set out clear procedures for dealing with bullying, so that all members of the school community know what they can expect from the school
- To work in partnership with parents and Carers to promote positive relationships

What is bullying?

Aberdeenshire Council defines bullying as:

*Bullying takes place when the actions of an individual or group of people cause harm to someone by taking advantage of an imbalance of power within a relationship (whether perceived or real).*

*Bullying behaviour is abusive. Bullying behaviour is often displayed as a result of past experiences which affect and impact on current actions.*

*Bullying can be verbal, physical, emotional or cyber. It can be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, persistent, or a one-off incident. People who experience bullying behaviour feel vulnerable and/or socially isolated.*

Bullying can be a serious problem that impacts on children's enjoyment and engagement with education and has a major impact on their health and wellbeing. It can undermine their self-esteem and self-confidence. Bullying behaviour can harm pupils physically and emotionally.

Verbal or physical bullying can include:

- Name calling
- Hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, spitting
- Stealing/damaging someone's belongings
- Threatening
- Malicious gossiping/ spreading rumours

- Teasing about personal or physical differences
- Teasing about family/domestic/cultural situations
- Excluding/ isolating someone purposefully
- Swearing and insulting language
- Forcing someone to do something they do not wish to do
- Sending offensive/threatening messages, pictures or images on paper, social media and online gaming platforms or by phone

The Equality Act 2010.

Aberdeenshire Council is obliged to meet the requirements of The Equality Act 2010. Bullying can be linked to some of the protected characteristics defined by this Act. See Banchory Primary School Equalities Policy.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends or arguments. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal changes or breakdowns in friendships. We must learn how to deal with these situations to develop the social skills to repair relationships.

Children may indicate signs and symptoms that they are being bullied. Adults can look out for these possible signs

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school bus
- Changes the usual routine
- Is unwilling to come to school or go home
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Regularly feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do less well in schoolwork
- Comes home with clothes or belongings damaged or missing
- Asks for money, is in possession of unknown money
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Stops eating
- Is frightened/ visibly upset to say what is wrong
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable

These signs and behaviours could indicate other issues, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

## Preventing bullying

The 7 underpinning values held at Banchory Primary School are RESPECT, AMBITION, INDIVIDUALITY, KINDNESS, BRAVERY, OPTIMISM and WONDER. As part of our approach to promoting positive behaviour we aim to

- Create a school ethos which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour
- Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with the whole school community
- Our Values and Bees are displayed around the school and in classrooms as a visual reminder and should be referred to in conversations around conduct.
- Enabling pupils to develop the skills required to build positive relationships and provide strategies to support them in managing relationships.
- Teach resilience within the curriculum, through whole-school programmes such as Emotionworks and SCARF.
- Encouraging the whole school community to respect themselves and to treat each other with respect.
- Ensuring that everyone has a shared understanding of Restorative Approaches.
- Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour choices.
- Ensuring that everyone feels listened to.
- Staff use their professional judgement in identifying and responding to bullying.
- Working in cooperation with parents/carers.
- Provide access to training and key information for staff.

## Raising Awareness

This is developed through:

- Implementing programmes of activities including games, stories, role-play, written work, drawing pictures, poster campaigns, circle time
- Targeted lessons to increase knowledge and understanding of Anti-bullying policies
- Creating visual displays relating to aspects of bullying
- Raising the profile of Anti-bullying work through assemblies and lesson work especially at key points in the year, e.g., during National Anti-Bullying Week in November.
- Discussions in Pupil Council meetings
- Encouraging pupils to share key messages about bullying with others
- Educating pupils, staff, parents/carers about what to do and how to support those involved

Throughout these activities, pupils share experiences, think of the feelings of others, share opinions, explore difficult feelings to better develop self-respect, assertiveness, resilience, cooperation, and independence.

## Communication

Communication between home and school is essential in effectively dealing with instances of bullying. If parents/carers believe that their child is experiencing bullying, they should contact the school immediately. Likewise, if staff become aware of bullying within the school, they will make parents/carers aware of the situation and discuss actions to resolve it.

Communication is at the heart of prevention strategies and responses to incidents of bullying behaviour. It is essential to use communication to build relationships in the early identification of difficulties.

At Banchory Primary School we ensure regular contact with parents/carers of pupils affected by bullying behaviour, particularly in the initial weeks after issues have been identified and worked through.

We ask parents to appreciate that investigating a reported incident of bullying takes time. The school will get back to you within the agreed timeline. Staff will address any concerns that parents/carers may have about bullying and they will be asked to cooperate with the school in supporting their child and promoting the message that bullying behaviour is not acceptable.

## Response to Bullying Behaviour

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying. When bullying is reported, it will be taken seriously. It will be fully investigated.

When an incident is reported, the staff member investigating will act on the information immediately.

At Banchory Primary School we follow a 6-step approach:

1. Speak to the individuals involved, gathering as much information as possible
2. Speak to parents/carers
3. Use a Restorative Approach to have open and honest conversations and resolve differences
4. Record the incident
5. Monitor the situation
6. Review whether the situation has been resolved

We investigate to find out what has happened, listen to everyone involved and record the incident and action taken. All incidents are investigated, recorded, discussed and resolved and we support all pupils involved. We try, wherever possible, to work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve incidents.

## Restorative Approach

Restorative Approach Conversations are at the heart of the mediation process. This helps to develop self-awareness and enables pupils to understand and share their emotions safely. It is important that all pupils are given time to express their views. Repairing the harm done to relationships in the event of conflict and incidents of inappropriate behaviour is a high priority at Banchory Primary School. The emphasis is placed on a 'solution' rather than a 'blame' approach. We ensure that everyone is given a voice and feels heard. These restorative practices ensure that children feel safe, they belong, are respected and have valuable positive relationships with others.

## Support

Support for the child that has been bullied is essential both immediately following the incident and during the agreed period of review set by the school and parents. Peer support, staff support, parental support and outside agency support may be necessary to ensure that the child does not suffer any damaging effects. After an agreed period staff will meet with the child to review the situation and the relationship between those involved.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Having an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff
- Reassurance from staff
- Getting continuous support from staff
- Finding solutions, with staff, that work for them
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

It is recognised that support must be given to the child who has bullied another. Disciplinary procedures against this child are intended to change or modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully. Such procedures may include:

- Working on positive behaviour/ self-regulation strategies
- Withdrawal of activities
- Establishing a mentoring or a buddy system
- Discussion about the effects of bullying
- Involvement of other agencies and services

We will work with the pupil that is displaying bullying behaviour to support them to change this behaviour. We will work with the parents/carers of pupils who display bullying behaviour to support and encourage them to find ways to regulate and manage their feelings/ emotions.

Labelling children as 'bullies' or 'victims' can be unhelpful in changing their behaviour or supporting their recovery. Labelling an action/ behaviour as bullying is a more effective way of motivating a child to change their behaviour rather than naming the child as a bully.

## Reporting and Monitoring

Incidents of bullying are centrally recorded and monitored within the Bullying and Equalities module on SEEMiS (RAMBIS). Any actions progressed are also recorded, reviewed and monitored within this. It will also be recorded in a child's Pastoral Notes.

By recording such incidences, we will be able to:

- ensure that there has been an appropriate and effective response.
- identify recurring patterns including the involvement of particular children, staff or adults where and when bullying takes place, aspects of prejudice or discrimination underlying bullying, consideration of personal or additional support needs.
- identify if professional development is required for staff.



#### Practical Advice for Pupils that are being bullied:

- Be assertive. Tell someone who is bullying you to “Go away” or “Stop it”. Say it loudly and walk away immediately.
- Tell a grown up that you trust straight away, if you are scared, ask a friend to go with to tell someone.
- Understand that the problem needs to be discussed and solved.
- Fighting back will make things worse.
- Don’t blame yourself for what is happening. It’s not your fault.

#### Practical Advice for Pupils that see someone else being bullied:

- If you witness bullying or are aware of it taking place, tell an adult.
- Don’t smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don’t rush over and try to take the bully on yourself.
- Don’t join in.
- Shout for help.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.

#### Practical Advice for Parents:

- Encourage your child to talk about what has happened and talk through any incidents calmly. Remember that there may be another side to the story.
- If you are concerned, contact the school immediately so that the matter can be investigated. Your concern will be taken seriously, and appropriate action will follow.
- Encourage your child to tell a teacher or a PSA if they or any of their friends are experiencing bullying.
- Look out for signs such as headaches, stomach aches, reluctance to come to school, or acting out of character.
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- Tell your child that there is nothing wrong with him/her and that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
- Make sure that your child knows our policy on bullying and that they need not be afraid to ask for help.
- If your child is accused of bullying the school will investigate the incident, keep you informed and work with you.

We will treat bullying as a serious offence and take every opportunity to eradicate it from our school. Bullying is neither accepted nor tolerated at Banchory Primary School. Working together we can make things better for everyone.

#### Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure that this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated. Staff, pupils and parents/carers will be involved in reviewing anti-bullying policies and procedures.

Questionnaires completed by the whole school community, together with surveys, focus groups, records of incidents will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the policy. Amendments will be made as necessary and everyone informed.

## Sources of further information, support and help

There is a vast amount of information and guidance available about bullying that can provide a wide range of support and help. The following list is a small selection of the support available.

Anti-Bullying Alliance [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Anti-bullying Network [www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)

BeatBullying [www.beatbullying.org.uk](http://www.beatbullying.org.uk)

Bully Free Zone [www.bullyfreezone.co.uk](http://www.bullyfreezone.co.uk)

Chatdanger [www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com) a website about the potential dangers online (including bullying), and advice on how to stay safe whilst chatting

Childline [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) ChildLine Scotland's Anti-Bullying Line (0800 44 1111)

Childnet [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Kidscape [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) a national charity offering support and advice to parents of bullied children (08451 205 204)

NSPCC [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

ParentLine [www.parentlinescotland.org.uk](http://www.parentlinescotland.org.uk) (0808 800 2222)

Respectme [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk) Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service (0844 800 8600)

Young Minds Parents Information Service [www.youngminds.org.uk/pis](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/pis) A service providing information and advice for any adult with concerns about the mental health or emotional wellbeing of a child (0800 018 2138)

Think U Know [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

UK Safer Internet Centre [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/22006/antibullying-guidance-2015-version-1.pdf](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/22006/antibullying-guidance-2015-version-1.pdf)

Youth Commission – Anti-Bullying Guidance for Learning Establishments 2015

[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/22025/anti-bullying-policy-2015-version-1.pdf](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/22025/anti-bullying-policy-2015-version-1.pdf)

Aberdeenshire Council Anti-Bullying Policy for Learning Establishments 2015

<http://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/RESPECT-FOR-ALL-FINAL.pdf>

provides a framework for adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including cyberbullying

Better relationships, better learning, better behaviour, 2013

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/03/7388>

Building the curriculum for excellence through positive relationships and behaviour, 2009

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/doc/316280/0100664.pdf>

Improving relationships and positive behaviour in Scotland's schools, 2008

<http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/04/15100117/0>

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – In Child Friendly Language – UNICEF

<http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf>

GIRFEC

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>