

Castlehill Primary School and ELR

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.

(Dec 2019)

Rationale

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers of Castlehill Primary and Enhanced Learning Resource (ELR) on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance (2015, reviewed 2019).

Aims

The aims of the Castlehill's Anti Bullying 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 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 (*Respect Me*, 2015).

Bullying also occurs in the virtual world which children and young people access through the Internet, via social networking (e.g. Tik Tok, Snapchat, Kik, Whatsapp, Instagram etc.), online gaming and mobile phones. Almost all social media platforms are recommended for 16 year olds or over, but it is acknowledged that many children in our school regularly use these platforms. This then means that communication can happen anywhere and at any time, often unsupervised. On-line bullying can be very pervasive and difficult to handle, especially for children under 16 years old. 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 'Respect Me' – Scotland's Anti-bullying Service on their website - www.respectme.org.uk/resources/publications.

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:

- gender reassignment
- pregnancy & maternity
- racist bullying
- religion and belief
- homophobic bullying
- disablist bullying;
- body image;
- sexism and gender;
- looked after children and young people;
- young carers;
- 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. Castlehill 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;
- taking and damaging belongings;
- ignoring, excluding, spreading rumours;
- sending abusive messages electronically, e.g. online gaming, via text, emails or social networking 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.

Not every unkind behaviour constitutes bullying. Children and young people are still learning how to get along with others. They 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. These are examples of ordinary conflict, perhaps thoughtlessness and possibly insensitive behaviour and should be viewed as a normal part of growing up. However, if left unchecked, these behaviours can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feeling afraid, uncomfortable or unsafe in their environment. They should be viewed as an opportunity to help children and young people learn about resolving conflict and getting along with others. Parents, teachers and other adults need to model kindness, conflict resolution, inclusion and responsibility. The table below shows different classifications of behavior that should be resolved with adult support timeously:

Conflict	Rude	Mean	Bullying
Occasional	Occasional	Occasional	Dependent on impact
Not planned/in the heat of the moment	Spontaneous/often unintentional behaviour	Intentional behaviour	Is often planned and done on purpose
All parties are upset	Can upset and cause hurt feelings	Can hurt deeply	Can cause serious, life-long emotional damage
All parties want to work it out	Often based in thoughtlessness or poor manners	Often based in anger; impulsive cruelty	The bully is trying to gain power or control over the target
All parties will accept responsibility	Rude person should accept responsibility	Behaviour is often regretted	The bully often blames the target
An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem	Apology	Apology is sufficient	The target wants the bully's behaviour to stop
Can usually be resolved through mediation	Social skill building could be of benefit	Needs to be addressed/should not be ignored	Cannot be resolved through mediation.

Prevention of Bullying

At Castlehill we work continuously to create a positive and supportive ethos. A culture that encourages respect, values opinions, accepts and celebrates difference and promotes positive relationships. This makes it difficult for bullying behaviour to occur or be tolerated.

Approaches in place include:

- Rights respecting themes, including hidden disabilities sessions explored at the beginning of each school session by every class and are progressive across the school. This includes each class creating a 'Class Charter' for the year ahead;
- Assemblies focussing on the Castlehill Code, School Mottos, School Vision, Values and Aims as well as the School Values;
- Each class implements emotional check-ins;
- Each class creates a system for children to share worries or concerns;
- Each year an Anti-Bullying School Group is established;
- Effective use of our Pupil Support Group which meets 6 weekly. This involves Educational Psychology and will identify vulnerable pupils, plan supports and next steps;
- Termly tracking with class teachers to identify vulnerable pupils and appropriate supports;
- Creative and motivational ways to engage pupils and raise awareness of bullying with theatre groups, speakers, film footage and music;
- Anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies;
- Encouraging pupils to report conflict, rude, mean or bullying behaviours in a way they feel comfortable;
- Developing 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.
- Workshops with parents in relation to online safety.

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 Leadership 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 (more information in the next section);
- The member of staff should inform parents of the incident and action taken, unless there are significant reasons why this is not appropriate.

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When a child or young person has displayed bullying behaviour, a member of the 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 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 leaders have the power to exclude as a last resort.

Communicating Awareness

It is essential that everyone takes responsibility in creating a safe and supportive environment within Castlehill and we aim to achieve this by:

- maintaining a focus on the School Values, including core values using class and school charters 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 HWB 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.

Review of Guidelines

Anti-Bullying Guidelines will be reviewed 2022-2023

As a Gold Rights Respecting School children, staff and parents value diversity, children's rights and sustainability. Expectations for staff, pupils and parents are high assuming mutual respect for all. Through restorative approaches staff will support children who have not upheld the high standards of behaviour and respect at Castlehill.