

Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce



Equality, Diversity and Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

June 2012

Our Equality Values and Beliefs

- All our pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included
- Our shared values of mutual respect between staff and pupils, high expectations of success within a caring and supportive environment form the basis for our positive school ethos.
- Within our wider school community, we promote tolerance and understanding of one another and value diversity.
- We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination.
- We recognise the effects that bullying and discrimination can have on pupils' feelings of worth, on their school work and in the community.
- We actively foster good relationships between diverse groups and individuals.
- We recognise that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on account of their age, disability, ethnicity and gender, looked after status, religion or belief, socio economic status or any combination of these.

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination.

We use the legal definition of "equalities" which gives protection to people who have specific characteristics – for example being gay, lesbian or bisexual or from a minority ethnic group or disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone undergoing gender change, as well as those of particular faith groups. The Equality Act 2010 describes these as "Protected Groups".

Definitions

Bullying can be described as an abuse of power. People who are bullied are upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are probably worried that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Cyber bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging or social networking sites. Any bullying can make you feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. Something only needs to happen once for you to feel worried or scared to go to school or to other places you enjoy going to. Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is doesn't mean it's not bullying.

Equalities has a legal definition of giving protection to people who have a specific characteristic; for example being from an ethnic group or disabled or old. The Equalities Act 2010 defines "protected groups" as looked-after children, young carers and children from poor backgrounds.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. However, all staff, pupils and parents have an active role to play in the development and maintenance of the policy and its success.

The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership team should monitor and report annually on the implementation of this policy. They should also review and update the policy at least every four years.

Pupils are expected to report all incidents of bullying and incidents that other children may be afraid to report.

Pupils should support each other and seek to ensure that everyone feels safe and no-one feels excluded or afraid in school.

Teachers are expected to be proactive, to treat all allegations seriously and record incidents.

Parents can help by supporting our anti-bullying policy and guidelines.

Parents can encourage their children to be positive members of the school community, discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may have.

Parents can seek to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school, speaking to the Head Teacher if concerns are serious and on-going.

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we ask that this be brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. Parents should put any complaints in writing addressed to the Head Teacher. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then the matter can be referred to the Department's Advice and Conciliation Service.

We evaluate this policy using the following measures:

- The rates of incidents that are reported to staff over an annual period.
- Rates of attendance, exclusions, attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups.
- Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying in secondary schools through periodic questionnaires.
- We investigate patterns of absence to ensure that children are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied.
- The number of complaints and compliments that we receive from parents.
- From the comments made by visitors and other people connected with the school.

The policy and procedures will be reviewed every four years.

Procedures

Prevention

Poster campaigns will be used at key dates in the year to support pupils with dealing with bullying and seeking help.

There are public, accessible, welcoming messages throughout the school in a range of languages. We use evaluation tools which measure ethos, relationships and confidence in schools, such as pupil well-being questionnaires, pupil focus groups and bullying surveys.

We involve other agencies and partners in health, police and the voluntary sector.

The school holds diversity and anti-bullying days, weeks and assemblies and publishes its work.

Training opportunities are promoted to staff and parents that explore the development of attachment, empathy, resilience and problem solving skills.

Children in our school take part in Circle Time which is used to share feelings and concerns.

Bullying and equalities issues are a standing item on our Pupil Council agenda.

Playground supervision is regularly reviewed to be alert to bullying and discrimination.

We annually review our arrangements for young people to raise issues confidently with staff.

Our staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination.

The Curriculum for Excellence is used to

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities and responsible citizens.
- Provide age-appropriate reading materials and resources that provide a balanced diversity, e.g. family structures that include single parents, ethnic minorities, disabled people and same-sex parents.
- Monitor and improve where needed the attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups to develop successful learners.
- Ensure that children and young people in protected groups are appropriately included in developing pupil participation as effective contributors.
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals.
- Raise awareness about bullying and our Equality, Diversity and Anti-Bullying Policy across a range of school subjects.

What we do when bullying occurs

A child may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and is taken seriously. The level of awareness of a child who is bullying is a significant factor in how it is dealt with.

Pupils who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures.

Some examples of our strategies are:

Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances

Involvement of parent/carer where appropriate

Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector

De-escalation strategies

Physical separation of person/people bullying, where necessary and possible

Support base, safe room where feasible

Sanctions, including loss of privileges

Assessment of additional support needs for person being bullied or person bullying

Referral to specific support service, such as Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare Service,

Social Work service or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

In extreme cases, Child Protection procedures will be considered

Exclusion from school is not itself used as a sanction or punishment for bullying behaviour and will only be used as a last resort

Our support to pupils who are bullied or discriminated against:

They are reassured that they do not deserve this and it is not their fault.

We reassure them that it was right to report the incident.

We encourage them to talk about how they feel and try to ascertain the extent of the problem.

We engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.

We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.

We ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.

We affirm that it can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does.

Our work with pupils who bully others

We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying separately.

We listen to their version of events and talk to anyone who may have witnessed the bullying.

We reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop.

We seek a commitment to this end.

We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.

We consider sanctions under our schools Behaviour/Discipline Policy.

We advise pupils responsible for bullying that we check to ensure that bullying stops.

We ensure that those involved know that we have done so.

When bullying occurs, we contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.

We follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again.

Reporting and Recording Incidents

Pupils who have been bullied should report this to their class teacher or to a Pupil Support Assistant in the playground.

Pupils who see others being bullied should report this to their class teacher or to a Pupil Support Assistant in the playground.

Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should report this to the Principal Teacher or Head Teacher.

Reports of bullying are logged by the Head Teacher.

Records are kept by the Head Teacher.

All incidents are recorded and acts of bullying or discrimination on grounds of race, disability, gender, faith and sexual orientation are of equal concern and are all clearly distinguishable. We send annual reports of incidents to our departmental colleagues on request.

Cyberbullying and bullying outside the school premises

We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The bullying may be done 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 tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.

- Talk to the Head Teacher of another school whose pupils are allegedly bullying.

- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses.

- Talk to the police.

Planning

We examine and use all available information to ensure that the promotion of equality and anti-bullying issues are contained within our development plans.

Equality Impact Analysis

When reviewing or creating any new policies or services within our school, we give due regard to all protected groups and consider whether any individual or group might experience a particularly positive or negative impact. We keep a record of this and where necessary take steps to reduce any negative impact.

Involvement

We actively encourage all our young people to participate in school and extra-curricular activities and we take positive action to make sure that the diverse school population is represented in activities, surveys and our student council.

Gathering and Monitoring Information Examples

Our school routinely monitors attainment of pupils by ethnicity and gender. We are also committed to developing measures for monitoring the achievements of our looked-after and disabled pupils.

We also monitor attendance and exclusion of pupils by ethnicity, disability and gender.

We examine our annual records of incidents and survey information.

We are aware of our local demography, through pupil census data.

We use information from surveys of pupils' views and opinions.

We take active steps to ensure that all data held on pupils' disabilities, ethnicity, caring and looked-after status is accurate and regularly reviewed.

Related Policies

You may wish, finally, to refer to other relevant school policies.