

Twechar Primary School and Early Years Centre



Anti- Bullying Policy

March 2021



Twechar Primary and Early Years Centre

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.

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Rationale

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers of Twechar Primary and Early Years Centre on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti- Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (updated 2019)

Aims

We aim to:

- develop positive relationships amongst children and adults which are mutually respectful, responsible and trusting; and promote their emotional health and wellbeing;
- build capacity, resilience and skills in children, parents and carers, to prevent and deal with bullying;
- prevent bullying of children and young people through a range of policies, strategies and approaches;
- support children, 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).

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children 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.

Twechar Primary and Early Years Centre 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.

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, eg 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.

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.

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

At Twechar Primary and Early Years Centre, we work to create a positive and supportive ethos. A culture that encourages respect, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes positive relationships. This may include particular approaches such as:

- buddying or mentoring;
- peer mediation;
- system which identifies 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;
- encouraging pupils to report bullying incidents using 'worry' boxes and the school Intranet;
- 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.

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 to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behaviour;
- addressing what is happening behind the behaviour, even when the bullying has stopped.

Such approaches might include:

- positive behaviour strategies with an appropriate member of staff, as agreed;
- restorative approaches;
- solution orientated approaches;
- involvement of educational psychologists.

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.

It is essential that everyone takes responsibility in creating a safe and supportive environment within Twechar Primary and Early Years Centre and we aim to achieve this by:

- maintaining a focus on rights of all children and adults within our school community;
- supporting anti-bullying projects and nurturing a positive ethos of respect for all;
- promoting work on personal safety and bullying as part of the 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

- Contacting the school office to make an appointment to speak to the Headteacher;
- Informing a member of staff who will share this information with the Headteacher.

What will we do when you tell us?

Steps we will take will include:

- Arranging to meet with you to listen to your concerns and gather information;
- Investigate any concerns raised and inform you of this investigation in a timely manner;
- Put in place measures to support all pupils involved.

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



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