

Brunstane

Primary School



Anti-Bullying Procedure 2024/2025

Anti-Bullying Procedure Contents

Section	Page
Introduction	1
Brunstane Primary as a Rights Respecting School	1
Purpose	1
Our Values and Beliefs	2
Definitions	3
Responsibilities	5
Concerns and Feedback	6
Evaluating and Reviewing our Procedure	6
Approaches	7
Support For Those Who Are Bullied or Discriminated Against	10
Our Work With Those Who Bully Others	10
Reporting and Recording Incidents	11
Online Bullying and Bullying Outside the School Premises	11

Brunstane Primary as a Rights Respecting School

Brunstane Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. This procedure covers the following articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Article 2 – You have the right to protection against discrimination.
- Article 19 – You have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.
- Article 29 – You have the right to an education which develops your personality and your respect for other's rights and the environment.

Purpose

This procedure exists to protect all children, young people and staff within Brunstane Primary from all forms of unacceptable behaviours by other children and young people.

The emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of achieving the outcomes that our children have the best start to life and are ready to succeed and become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors

This procedure has been revised and updated following consultation with staff, parent and pupil groups, including our Pupil Council, Equalities Committee and Rights Respecting School Committee.

Our Values and Beliefs

- All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. Brunstane supports every young person to achieve and attain their very best.
- We respect individuality and celebrate diversity.
- We provide opportunities for success through a variety of curricular and extra-curricular options and pathways.
- We encourage creativity and support our young people to build the skills and resilience they need for the future.
- We have the courage to aspire to be the very best we can be. We belong to our school and we are very proud of our tradition and heritage.
- We use restorative approaches to repair and strengthen relationships between staff and pupils within our whole school community.
- We are committed to promoting 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 a young person's feelings of worth, on their health and wellbeing and on their school work.
- We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals.
- We recognise that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination because of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked-after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, culture, sexual orientation and socio-economic status or any combination of these.

Definitions

What is bullying behaviour?

"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".

- Bullying behaviours may include:
- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening.
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours.
- Hitting, tripping, kicking.
- Taking and damaging belongings.
- Sending an abusive text, email or instant message, or posting an abusive comment on a social networking site (online bullying).
- Targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be. (This may include racism, sexism, disability or homophobia, as well as differences in socio-economic background.)
- Online bullying, or 'cyberbullying' will not be treated any differently; it's still about behaviour and impact. The behaviour is the same but it takes place online, usually on social networking sites and online gaming platforms, and can include a person being called names, threatened or having rumours spread about them. We will address online bullying in the same way as the behaviours described above.

What is not bullying behaviour?

In order to work effectively, positively and diligently to prevent and respond to all forms of bullying and allegations of bullying behaviour, it is important to distinguish between what is and is not bullying behaviour.

Anyone can make a mistake or behave in a way that is inappropriate but not every action that has a negative impact on someone else is "bullying behaviour". Part of our responsibility and duty is to support our children and young people to develop resilience. We cannot condone the overuse or misuse of the term "bullying" or react disproportionately to children and young people's behaviours. To do so would be counterproductive.

We know that children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of development and most children and young people have the ability to bounce back from these experiences. It is important to discuss how they feel and help them to develop resilience to manage their relationships. This is in line with guidance from respectme. *"We should always remember that children 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. This is a normal part of growing up and should be distinguished from bullying. However, in an environment where this behaviour is left unchecked, it can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feel afraid, uncomfortable and unsafe in their environment." (Respect Me, 2018).

"Furthermore, bullying behaviour can sometimes be unsuccessful as bullying behaviours can sometimes have no impact. In this case the person the behaviours were directed at has not been bullied but the behaviour still needs to be challenged appropriately and should not be ignored. For example, the use of homophobic or prejudicial language, which may have no impact on the person it is aimed at, must still be challenged, as the language itself is unacceptable and could affect other people.

Respectme state "Bullying can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration. If you are unsure if behaviour is bullying, look at the effect it is having on the child or young person. If they are unable to respond effectively and regain their sense of self and control in the situation, adults need to intervene to help restore it. Keeping the focus on impact reduces the emphasis on issues of persistence and intent. What you do about bullying is more important than how you define it." (2018).

Incidents may be perceived as bullying when they are, in fact, criminal in nature. It is important to ensure that criminal offences such as hate crime, child sexual exploitation and gender-based violence are clearly distinguished from bullying. For example, when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying. It is sexual assault, sexual abuse or gender-based violence. There are laws to protect children and young people from this very serious behaviour.

Dysregulated/distress behaviours from children with an identified additional support need

Children may be hurt at times when a pupil with additional supports needs displays dysregulated distress behaviours. Whilst these can at times lead to others feeling hurt or frightened, these behaviours are not a targeted act aimed at removing agency from another pupil.

Equalities

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 recognised ethnic group or disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone being or becoming transsexual, as well as those of particular faith groups. The Equality Act 2010 defines these as 'protected groups'. Individuals who do not have any of the legally protected characteristics may also be vulnerable to bullying. For example, care experienced children, young carers and children and young people from poorer backgrounds.

Responsibilities

The **Head Teacher** is responsible for the introduction and implementation of their local procedure. However, **all staff, all pupils and their parents/carers** must play an active part in the development and maintenance of the procedure and in its success. Teachers and support staff are expected to be proactive, to treat all allegations seriously and to refer reports of incidents to other staff as appropriate, who will maintain accurate appropriate records.

Pupils are asked to:

- report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that other young people may be afraid to report where it is safe for them to do so
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents/carers can help by:

- Supporting anti-bullying procedure.
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of our school communities.
- Monitoring closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet and intervening if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.
- Speaking to an appropriate member of staff if they have any concerns about bullying of their child or of another child/children.
- Speaking to the Head Teacher if their concerns continue following school staff's intervention.
- Making use of the school's complaints procedure/City of Edinburgh Council's Advice and Conciliation service if concerns continue following the Head Teacher's intervention.

Children and young people are responsible, as far as possible, for:

- Promoting positive attitudes and relationships.
- Respecting others even if they don't like them, they don't agree with them or do they don't enjoy the same things they do.
- Questioning and learning the differences between bullying and other non-bullying behaviours.
- Where they feel safe, telling someone if they have any worries about bullying and/or prejudice.
- Seeking support from others to tell if they need it.
- Keeping themselves and others safe, with support from adults.

- Encouraging and supporting others to tell a responsible adult or speaking on their behalf.
- Challenging bullying and prejudicial behaviour, if safe to do so.

The Equalities Co-ordinator, in consultation with the Head Teacher, is required to:

- Monitor and report annually on the implementation of this procedure.
- Supervise the review and updating of this procedure at least every four years.

Concerns and Feedback

We recognise that there may be times when parents/carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying or a wider community issue. We ask that if the parent/carer feel that the incident/issue has not been fully resolved to their satisfaction then this should be brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents/carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then the matter can be referred to the Department's *Advice and Conciliation Service*. We are also pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well.

Evaluating and Reviewing our Procedure

- We evaluate the effectiveness of this procedure on an annual basis, reviewing the number of incidents that are reported alongside the attendance, exclusions, attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups.
- Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying are reviewed through questionnaires and focus groups.
- The feedback received from parents is also taken into consideration.
- The procedure is formally reviewed every 3 years.

Approaches

Preventative Approaches

- We use the advice of respectme, “Promoting Diversity and Equality: Developing Responsible Citizens for 21st Century Scotland (Education Scotland) and “Included Engaged and Involved (Education Scotland).
- Information is provided to children, young people and parents/ carers explaining how the establishment deals with bullying.
- Ongoing events involving the school community that promote equality and diversity.
- Building resilience and empathy through Edinburgh Health and Wellbeing Team's range of Growing Confidence and resilience programmes
- Use of appropriate approaches and resources for example nurture and Emotion Talks, to develop social skills and emotional literacy.
- Staff to access staff development on core themes: promoting positive relationships, resilience, restorative approaches, rights respecting schools, growing confidence, nurture, equalities etc.
- Consistent responses to negative interactions, distressed behaviours and bullying behaviours led by restorative practices.
- Frequent opportunities for children and young people to discuss issues and for them to request private appointments with staff to talk.
- Welcoming public messages throughout the establishment in a range of languages.
- Use of self-evaluation tools which measure ethos, relationships and confidence in the establishment, such as pupil well-being questionnaires and surveys.
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in social work, health, police and the voluntary sector.
- Audits of race, equality, inclusion and achievement of bilingual and minority ethnic pupils
- Promotion of training opportunities to parents that explore the development of attachment, empathy and resilience and developing problem solving skills e.g. Psychology of Parenting Project, Incredible Years, Growing Confidence.
- Working towards award programmes, e.g. UN Rights Respecting Schools Award,
- The school holds diversity and anti-bullying projects to raise the profile of these issues.

- There is a highly regarded befriending system in place to support transition from primary school and senior pupils have also been trained in peaceful resolution to conflict in order to promote the positive school ethos.
- Bullying and equalities issues are a standing item on our Pupil Parliament agenda.
- Our staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination as well as skills in restorative justice

Curriculum for Excellence is used to:

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities as 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 Procedure across a range of school subjects.

Protective Approaches

We use a number of interventions that aim to build protective resilience factors in children and young people, particularly those who are identified as being vulnerable or at risk. For example:

- Buddy systems, especially at transition times.
- Groups to support identified pupils for example nurture groups and Seasons for Growth'
- Use of materials such as 'Keeping Myself Safe'.
- Participation in the Emotional Wellbeing academy led by Psychological Services and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- Peer mentoring and mediation.
- Specialist individual supports within and beyond school e.g. counselling and therapeutic services
- Playground supervision from trained staff who encourage and lead play
- Arrangements for young people to raise issues confidently with staff including for example, confidential 'Comments Box' or 'Listening Post' in neutral and confidential place.

- Encouraging everyone to respect others even if they don't like them, they don't agree with them or do they don't enjoy the same things they do.
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in social work, health, police and the voluntary sector.
- Involvement of Psychological Services where appropriate and with consent from the child and their parents

Responsive Approaches

- A young person may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and this is taken seriously.
- Pupils who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and will be supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures.

Example Strategies

- Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances.
- Involvement of a parent/carers where appropriate.
- Peer mentoring and mediation.
- De-escalation strategies.
- Physical separation of person/people bullying, where necessary and possible.
- Use of nurture room to bolster confidence and provide support.
- Consequences, including loss of privileges.
- Assessment of additional support needs, including counselling, for person being bullied or person bullying.
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector.
- Referral to specific support service, such as Psychological Services, Education Welfare Service, Social Work or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- If appropriate, Child Protection procedures will be followed.
- Exclusion from school is not itself a sanction or punishment for bullying behaviour

Our Support to Pupils Who Are Bullied or Discriminated Against

- Young people are reassured that they do not deserve this and it is not their fault.
- We assure 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 involve 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 consequences under our school's Relationships Procedure.
- We consider whether other referrals (to the educational psychologist, counsellor or police, for instance) are required.
- 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 in any form (for instance if someone else has been encouraged to take over the intimidation).
- We work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they need.

Reporting and Recording Incidents

- Pupils who have been bullied should report this to their teacher or their year head, or any member of staff if they prefer.
- Pupils who see others being bullied should report this to their guidance teacher or their year head, or any other member of staff.
- Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should report this to the designated senior manager. All instances should be recorded on a Wellbeing Concern form. The designated senior manager will share relevant and proportional information as necessary and maintain the appropriate records.
- 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.
- The annual Equalities return will be collected centrally from SEEMiS by the local authority from August 2020.

Online Bullying 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 informs us of bullying out with 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 if appropriate.