

# Strathmore Primary School Relationships and Anti Bullying Policy

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## **Rationale**

This policy has been drawn up within the school's ethos of promoting positive behaviour. Strathmore Primary School is committed to promoting positive relationships and an inclusive environment where all children feel respected, valued and safe. Strathmore Primary School actively seeks to provide an environment that is safe from all forms of intimidation.

In creating this document, key local and national guidelines and policies have been referred to. Strathmore has followed guidance from Scotland's anti-bullying framework of 'Respect for All' which has been guided by the Respectme anti-bullying service. In addition, Angus Council's Anti-Bullying Policy (2020) has been considered to ensure a constant approach across the council.

Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that 'Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental), they must be given proper care by those looking after them' – this is made explicit to all pupils and staff. The Equality Act (2010), also protects children and young people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Strathmore Primary School's inclusive approach will support and make reasonable adjustments to remove any barriers which will help ensure equal opportunities.

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is Scotland's national approach for supporting children and young people. It provides a consistent framework for services to work together with families to ensure every child gets the 'right help, at the right time, from the right people'. All children and young people at Strathmore are familiar with GIRFEC as the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators are a key feature in health and wellbeing across the school. Termly 'wellbeing webs' are completed for every child to check in and ensure appropriate supports are identified.

In order to effect behavioural change, labels such as 'victim' and 'bully' will be avoided. "Respectme", Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service advises that '*the person on the receiving end of bullying behaviour*' and '*the person displaying bullying behaviour*' should be used as an alternative.

## **Aim**

Our aim is to foster a whole-school ethos where bullying cannot thrive, where diversity is celebrated, and where all members of our community understand their role in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where every child feels valued, supported and able to participate fully. Our approach emphasises belonging, positive relationships and equitable access to learning within our school community.

## **Definition**

There are many different definitions of bullying behaviour. Respectme defines it by saying, '*Bullying is face to face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in. The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out*'. It can be offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour. It is an abuse of power or authority, which can impact an individual or group. Bullying behaviour is often targeted at a specific individual or group, and may be based on perceived difference. It can contribute to unhappiness, anxiety and stress and undermine wellbeing, learning, confidence and participation. The impact of bullying behaviour is a major barrier to learning. **"It is not a normal part of growing up".**

**Bullying behaviours can be described as verbal, physical, relational or online/digital. They include:**

- Name calling, teasing, put downs and threats
- Hitting, tripping, poking, kicking
- Stealing or damaging belongings
- Ignoring, isolating/leaving out others and spreading rumours
- Sending abusive/inappropriate text messages/images or emails
- Sending inappropriate messages/images on social networking sites e.g. Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook
- Making people feel that they are being bullied
- Targeting others because of perceived difference

**Prejudice-based bullying includes bullying related to:**

- Disability or additional support needs
- Race, ethnicity or culture
- Religion or belief
- Sex or gender
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Body image
- Socio-economic status
- Care experience
- Young carers

**Online/digital bullying is:**

- Pervasive - often occurring across multiple platforms
- Viral - with content able to spread quickly and widely
- Not tied to a physical location, meaning it can happen at any time
- Often linked to images, memes, videos, group chats or secret groups
- Able to blur the boundaries between school and the wider community, making it harder for children to escape the impact

Online bullying is treated as seriously as face-to-face bullying. Strathmore Primary School has fantastic links with the Community Policing Team who support the school in discussing online bullying with the second level classes.

This is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours that can be classed as bullying behaviour. Bullying behaviour can take place out with the school grounds and out with the school day.

Children and young people can experience bullying behaviour for a variety of reasons. In many cases, bullying occurs due to perceived difference. Some children and young people do not see or understand diversity, they only see difference.

In line with The Equality Act 2010 and Angus Council guidance, bullying related to any of the nine protected characteristics is unacceptable. These are; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Strathmore Primary School understands the importance of recognising, valuing, promoting and celebrating diversity across the entire school/learning community.

### **Prevention Procedures**

Angus Council fully acknowledges the importance of addressing bullying behaviour promptly and effectively. Strathmore Primary School believes in a proactive approach and focuses on prevention strategies to avoid bullying behaviour:

We:

- Include anti-bullying messages within our curriculum and through our school vision, values and aims
- Have included health and wellbeing (HWB) as a key strand of our School Improvement Plan
- All classes have 'Class Charters' that link with our school rules of 'Ready, Respectful and Safe' and The UNCRC Rights of the Child
- Promote and demonstrate appropriate digital and online behaviour through our digital technologies and HWB curriculum. The whole school appropriate digital usage policy is also shared with teachers, children, parents and carers which has to be agreed to and signed
- Aim to help pupils develop positive relationships through teaching social skills through listening and talking supported by Voice21
- Promote anti-bullying as the responsibility of all staff who model respectful, inclusive behaviour at all times
- Aim to promote a culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable
- Plan proactive strategies such as anti-bullying weeks/days, assemblies, posters and parent/carer engagement
- Celebrate diversity and challenge stereotypes
- Ensure safety and staff supervision of high-risk areas - cloakrooms, corridors, dining room and playground
- Pivotal behaviour blueprint is followed across the school to use restorative approaches or solution-focused approaches for positive behaviour management. There are clear procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour during school time (refer to Pivotal behaviour)
- Emotion Works is a key part of our HWB teaching. All staff use the language from this programme to support conversations relating to emotions and challenging situations. More recently, Decider Skills have been introduced at Strathmore to support children and young people with emotional regulation
- Teach pupils how to recognise and report bullying behaviour
- Promote an ethos that ***"It is all right to tell"*** about bullying behaviour

### **Reporting Bullying Behaviour and Procedures for dealing with complaints/allegations**

All concerns about bullying behaviour will be taken seriously, investigated and feedback provided within a mutually agreed timescale.

#### **Reporting Incidents**

Pupils can report incidents of bullying behaviour in the following ways:

- Tell an adult in the school – all staff will be approachable and will listen to any information given by a child
- Tell a friend who will then inform an adult in the school
- Tell your parents who will then inform the school

Parents can report incidents of bullying behaviour in the following ways:

- Message class teacher on Seesaw or phone school office to arrange a time for the class teacher to call you back or arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient time
- Telephone the school and speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Make an appointment to see a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or the class teacher

## **Intervention Procedures**

Whenever a pupil feels bullied, distressed or "got at" by others, the incident(s) will be investigated by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Then intervention procedures will be instigated promptly using a restorative and solution focused approach.

Key questions include:

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What does the child want to happen next?
- What needs to be done to repair harm?
- What attitudes or prejudices influenced the behaviour?

Interventions may be class-wide or specific to groups or individuals. Interventions may include:

- Mediation intervention including the person who is on the receiving end of the behaviour, the person displaying bullying behaviour and any bystanders
- Pivotal Approaches involving restorative questioning (including the 5 magic questions)
- Peer Mediation
- Circle Time
- Circle of Friends
- Social Groups
- A buddy may be assigned to look after a child on the receiving end of bullying behaviour, or encourage good behaviour from a child displaying bullying behaviour
- Whole-school assembly – promoting and encouraging a positive ethos, discussing whole school values and linking to any incidents (if they arise)
- Restorative Approaches
- Consequences linked to our Positive Behaviour Management policy e.g., loss of break time to write a letter of apology
- Emotion works to explore, understand and support restorative conversations.

Parents are not generally contacted over every issue, but should inappropriate behaviour continue after intervention strategies have failed to impact, then contact will be made.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour is the responsibility of **all** members of our school community – pupils, staff, parents and support agencies.

## **Angus Council**

- Support schools to implement the anti-bullying policy
- Encourage an ethos of openness, honesty and transparency across all educational settings
- Work in partnership with school communities on prevention and intervention relating to bullying behaviour
- Provide training and support to address bullying behaviour in all its forms
- Take account of bullying behaviour linked to advances in technological communication, including social media and online platforms
- Ensure schools review their anti-bullying policies every three years in line with Angus Council guidance
- Monitor bullying data regularly to inform practice and support effective prevention and response strategies across the authority

**Senior Leadership Team**

- Lead and coordinate anti-bullying practice
- Ensure staff training and professional learning
- Promote a positive, inclusive ethos
- Ensure the policy is reviewed every three years
- Ensure all incidents are recorded in SEEMiS Bullying & Equalities

**All Staff**

- Model positive, respectful relationships
- Listen to children and take concerns seriously
- Promote equality, diversity and children's rights
- Support children to develop resilience, self-esteem and coping strategies
- Follow school and Angus procedures
- Share concerns appropriately

**Parents and carers**

- Work collaboratively with the school
- Share concerns early
- Promote respectful relationships at home and in the community
- Engage with school anti-bullying initiatives

**Children and young people**

- Treat others with respect
- Avoid engaging in bullying behaviour
- Challenge bullying where safe
- Tell a trusted adult if they or someone else is being bullied
- Help create a positive school ethos

**Equal Opportunities and Additional Support Needs**

Our approach is inclusive and sensitive to individual needs. We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to bullying behaviour and will ensure appropriate support is provided.

We are committed to:

- Equality and diversity
- Children's rights
- Removing barriers to participation
- Supporting children with additional needs
- Addressing prejudice-based bullying behaviour effectively and robustly

**Monitoring and Review**

We will monitor and review the effectiveness of our Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures. This policy will be reviewed every three years to align with local guidelines or earlier if guidance changes. We will gather feedback from:

- Audit and review consultations with all stakeholders
- Statistical information
- Outcomes of incidents