



Hillhead Primary School



## Anti-Bullying Guidelines

*'Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards'.*

**Scottish Government (2010) – A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People**

January 2017

## **Rationale**

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers of Hillhead Primary School on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (2015).

## **Aims**

The aims of Hillhead Primary School's Guidelines are to ensure :

- that all children and young people are provided with a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which to learn;
- that all stakeholders of our school community, recognise that bullying is unacceptable in Hillhead Primary School
- that all stakeholders of our school community have a robust understanding of what bullying is and the procedures in place, should they witness or be exposed to such behaviours.
- a preventative approach to bullying is in place, through a wide range of interventions and whole school strategies
- effective support for children and young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying
- rigorous recording and monitoring procedures are in place in response to all incidents of bullying

## **Definitions of Bullying**

Bullying is a combination of behaviours and impacts that can affect someone's ability to feel in control of themselves; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be kept up over time, by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, hitting or hurting or the fear of these.

Bullying also occurs in the virtual world which children and young people access through the Internet, via social networking (eg Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat), computers and mobile devices. As communication can happen anywhere and at any time, often unsupervised, on-line bullying can be very pervasive and difficult to handle. 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 'respectme' – Scotland's Anti-bullying Service on their website – [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

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:

- homophobic bullying;
- racist bullying;
- disablist bullying;
- body image;
- religion and belief;
- sexism and gender;
- looked after children and young people;
- young carers;
- socio-economic group.

With this in mind, vulnerable children and young people may be particularly at risk of experiencing bullying.

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.

East Dunbartonshire Council 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;
- stealing 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.

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**

Hillhead Primary School strives to promote a culture based on nurturing relationships and equality for all, providing excellent learning and teaching to ensure enriching experiences to raise attainments for all. Central to our vision, are children and young people for whom we strive to develop positive wellbeing and promote the core values of respect, tolerance and integrity for themselves and others.

To promote such values, we provide children and young people with a range of experiences and implement a variety of strategies and approaches that encourage tolerance and respect:

- Celebration of wider achievements for all through weekly assemblies, presentations and awards
- Buddying and mentoring partnerships to support both pupils and staff
- Creative and motivational ways to engage pupils and raise awareness of bullying through theatre groups, drama, film footage, book studies and music.
- Anti-bullying Fortnight – a whole school focus that raises awareness of bullying and the negative impact it has on others
- Restorative Practices – an approach used by all staff, to support pupils to reflect on and resolve conflicts with peers.
- A wide range of play resources that promote pupils to socialise and engage positively with peers in the playground, encouraged and monitored by support staff and senior managers.
- A range of social spaces and play opportunities to support all pupils during lunch and break times
- Strong, trusting relationships between staff and children across the school, giving children the opportunity to approach and share concerns or worries with key staff
- A system that identifies vulnerable pupils and takes action to support such youngsters

- Alternative ways for children and young people to report bullying incidents; Circle Time, Worry Boxes, Wellbeing Questionnaires etc

## 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 given time to calm down and reassured that they will be 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 incident should be fully investigated by a member of staff, all statements and accounts should be recorded
- 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.
- following the incident, senior managers should ensure that the child or young person is closely monitored and supported to ensure that the bullying behaviour has stopped

When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the establishment's 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 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 for Schools and Local Authorities in Managing School Exclusions, 2011*), 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.

At Hillhead Primary School we will:

- raise awareness for all pupils and parents/carers during our annual Anti-Bullying Fortnight
- raise awareness for all staff through annual training refresher sessions of our Anti Bullying Policy
- raise awareness for all parents through our P1 Induction Programme and involvement various whole school events throughout each year

Hillhead Primary School have an Anti-Bullying Committee, consisting of pupils, staff and parents. Through regular meetings, the committee will plan a range of events that promote an inclusive and supportive culture, with a clear anti-bullying message.

## 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!

You should -

- walk away and stay calm
- speak to a trusted adult as soon as possible or -
- use the school 'Worry Banks' to write down your concern

## What will we do when you tell us?

We will -

- make sure that you feel calm and find a quiet place to speak to you
- listen to what you tell us and ask details about what has happened
- speak to other pupils or staff who may have seen what happened
- write down everything that is discussed

We will work together to find a solution to the incident by -

- sitting down in a calm place with everyone involved in the incident(s)
- encouraging everyone to be honest about what has happened
- listening to what everyone has to say
- talking about what has happened and how it makes people feel
- discussing right and wrong choices that people have made
- deciding how we are going to solve the problem or issue
- discuss how people involved will be supported or sanctioned
- keep a close eye on everyone involved, to make sure that there are no further problems

What pupils say about our Anti-Bullying policy at Hillhead Primary School –

*You don't really get Bullying at Hillhead because as soon as one thing happens, we all sit down and talk about it and sort it out. (P7 pupil)*

## Review of Guidelines

Anti-Bullying Guidelines will be reviewed during session 2018-2019