

## Ferryhill Primary School Equalities Policy

*"A person's a person, no matter how small." Dr Seuss*



## **Introduction and purpose**

The City of Edinburgh Council is strongly committed to providing a safe environment for all people in its educational establishments. We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination. Bullying, prejudice and discrimination are never acceptable and children, young people and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included.

This school procedure follows the City of Edinburgh Council's Communities and Families Procedure on 'Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People' (2020) which is based on 'Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People'. Central to this, Respect for All is underpinned by the values of Fairness, Respect, Equality and Inclusion. Respect for All aims to encourage a proactive and inclusive approach to anti-bullying policy and guidance development.

This procedure covers the following articles of the UNCRC:

- 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 and education which develops your personality and your respect for other's rights and the environment

## **School Values and Beliefs**

Here at Ferryhill Primary School our values are **kindness, Being Safe, Ready to Learn and Respect**. We are a vibrant, diverse and unique school, promoting tolerance and understanding of one another and celebrating and valuing diversity. 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 relations between diverse groups and individuals.

## **Definitions**

### **What is bullying?**

**Bullying** is both the behaviours 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. (respectme, 2015)

**Cyber-bullying** is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or social media. Cyberbullying is when someone uses the internet, phone, laptop, computer, tablet or online gaming to bully their victim.

Bullying might include one-off or unintentional incidents. Bullying is a breach of children's rights under several articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC Articles 19 and 37).

Bullying behaviour can happen face to face and online and includes:

- Being called names, being teased or made fun of
- Being hit, pushed or kicked
- Having your belongings taken or damaged
- Being deliberately ignored, left out, or having rumours spread about you
- Being humiliated
- Receiving abusive messages or having cruel comments made about you online
- Being targeted because of who you are or how people see you

Any of these examples can hurt you physically or emotionally and, although the behaviour might not be repeated, the worry that it will happen again can impact on a child.

### **Other definitions**

**Equalities** – *The legal definition of ‘equalities’ 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 defines these as ‘protected groups’. Looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from poor backgrounds can also be included as equalities groups.*

**Racism** – *The Council uses the same classification as Police Scotland, taken from the MacPherson report on the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that took place in 1999, i.e. “A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person” While this is not absolutely definitive, it requires all allegations to be treated seriously from the outset, investigated and if substantiated dealt with and then recorded. This approach is in line with our antibullying procedures and all forms of identity-based bullying.*

### **Protected Characteristics**

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

You are protected under the Equality Act 2010 from these types of discrimination.

### **Expectations and Responsibilities**

*“Right is right even if no one is doing it; wrong is wrong even if everyone is doing it.”*

— **Saint Augustine**

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include violence, assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, like name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages and hate crimes.

**Headteachers are:**

- responsible for the introduction and implementation of this procedure. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents/carers must play an active part in following the guidance and putting it into practice. Teachers and support staff are expected to be pro-active, to treat all allegations seriously and to refer reports of incidents to the designated member of the senior leadership team. The incident is recorded accurately with future actions detailed
- Ensure that, where necessary, the appropriate support is put in place for all children and young people involved in a bullying incident. This may be through pastoral support and could include counselling, peer support, solution-oriented approaches/restorative approaches

**The Equalities Co-ordinator and Headteacher should:**

- ensure that all allegations are reported and recorded rigorously
- supervise the review and updating of this procedure at least every three years
- Log, monitor and report annually on the implementation of this policy and supervise the updating of this policy at least every three years, along with the Senior Management at Leith Walk. We will include pupils, staff and parents in the review of this policy

**All school staff are required to:**

- Be aware of the policy and be pro-active in implementing the procedure
- model and promote positive behaviour, attitudes and relationships
- treat all allegations and observation of bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour or language seriously
- seek to address incidents and share concerns with SMT where appropriate
- where appropriate, record any incidents on a Wellbeing Concern form

**Pupils are asked to:**

- report all incidents and suspected incidents of any type of bullying, discrimination or prejudice that they experience to a member of staff, where it is safe for them to do so
- report all incidents and suspected incidents of bullying, discrimination and prejudice that they see to a member of staff, where it is safe for them to do so
- support each other and to seek help from a member of staff, to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school
- Include and value all members of the school community, promoting positive attitudes and good relations and challenge all forms of prejudice
- Question and learn the difference between bullying and other challenging behaviours.

**Parents/carers can help by:**

- being aware of *respectme*, Scotland's Anti-bullying Service booklet – Bullying Behaviour: A Guide for Parents and Carers ([available at http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/](http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/))
- working collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying, discrimination and prejudice cannot thrive

- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community
- speaking to any member of staff (the class teacher or member of Senior Leadership Team) if they have any concerns about bullying, discrimination and prejudice experienced by their child or by another child / children at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter
- monitoring closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet and to intervene if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately
- understanding that we seek to understand the experiences and address the needs of all children and young people who experience bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour as well as those who present bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour
- speaking to the Head Teacher if their concerns continue following initial intervention
- being aware that they can contact a relevant external organisation for advice and support
- being aware of the school's complaints procedure and the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service and their rights with regard to these procedures

If you need support or further information you may find the following agencies useful:

ParentLine Scotland. Tel : 0800 028 2233

[www.parentlinescotland.org.uk](http://www.parentlinescotland.org.uk) , [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) , [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk) , [www.childline.co.uk](http://www.childline.co.uk),  
[www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

### **Promotion of equality**

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
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals

### **Prevention**

Strategies to Prevent Bullying Behaviour:

- We remind pupils through assemblies, class lessons and poster campaigns that any type of bullying or discrimination is unacceptable
- We support an annual Anti-Bullying week
- Circle time activities in class to allow pupils to share thoughts and feelings
- Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood progression pathways followed from nursery to P7
- We use evaluation tools to measure ethos, relationships and confidence in schools, such as pupil well-being questionnaires and pupil voice groups
- The school supports nurture and friendship groups as necessary
- Our staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination. These opportunities will be promoted to staff
- We involve other agencies and partners where necessary, such as the police
- We hold parents' evenings to check in with families

## **Support**

### **Strategies to support pupils who are bullied or experience prejudice and discrimination**

*See also supplementary guidance on preventing and responding to incidents of prejudice and discrimination related to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. Part 1: Tackling Racist Incidents / Creating an Anti-Racist Culture.*

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

- We reassure them that they have done the right thing by sharing
- We encourage them to talk about how they feel, find out what happened and who was involved
- We involve them in making choices about how the matter could be resolved
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- We ask them to report any further incidents to us straight away
- We affirm that the bullying can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does
- We say clearly what will happen next and that we will update them on progress
- When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check that bullying has not started again

### **What happens next?**

- At all times, child protection procedures and/or Risk Management procedures should be followed, if necessary.
- On occasions when there is a continuing wellbeing concern following bullying behaviours, the National GIRFEC Practice Model will be used to establish the most appropriate course of action. It will then discuss next steps with the SLT
- The school will work with parents/ carers of the child who has been bullied to ensure that they are supported as the bullying may have changed the child's perspective of themselves or their confidence
- In most cases, further investigation will be done by the designated member of the senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator
- Further investigation may involve:
  - Speaking with the children or young people involved, preserving confidentiality
  - Speaking with children or young people or others who witnessed the incident, preserving confidentiality
  - Speaking with parents (*after consultation with the child or young person*)
  - Seeking advice from partner services and relevant organisations
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime), the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will report this to Police Scotland
- In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of the senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will seek advice from Police Scotland
- If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has taken place, we will take appropriate and proportionate action
- If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has not taken place, we will speak with the child or young person who reported the incident and offer further support if needed
- At all times, we will update the child or young person who reported bullying, prejudice or discrimination

### **Strategies to deal with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour or the presentation of prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes/behaviour (UNCRC Articles 3, 5 and 12)**

A child may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and this 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 engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of actions that are proportionate and appropriate to the age and stage of the child and to the incident.

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in the incident separately
- We listen to their version of events and take time to discover the reasons for the behaviour
- We talk to pupils who may have witnessed the incident
- We reinforce the message that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop
- We address prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes that may be behind the behaviour
- We seek a commitment to stop bullying
- We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied

#### What happens next?

- Some examples of our actions are:
  - Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances
  - Use of support systems to increase confidence and provide support, including use peer mentoring and mediation
  - Involvement of a parent/carer where appropriate
  - De-escalation strategies
  - Physical separation of person/people presenting bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour, where necessary and possible
  - Consequences, including loss of privileges
  - Consideration of what support the pupil needs and whether other referrals are required, e.g. educational psychologist, counsellor
  - Assessment of additional support needs, including counselling, for the person being bullied or experiencing prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour or for the person who is bullying or displaying prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour
  - 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 (CAMHS)
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime) we report this to Police Scotland
- In the case of hate incidents, we seek advice from Police Scotland
- We advise pupils responsible for bullying, prejudice or discrimination that we check to ensure that the behaviour stops
- We contact the parent/carer of the pupil(s) at an early stage
- We follow up after incidents to check that the bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour has not started again in any form

All incidents must be taken seriously and fully investigated. Parents must be appropriately informed at all stages. If an allegation of bullying is substantiated, support must be put in place in the form of individual, group or whole class work. A programme of monitoring must be set up with a clear indication of steps to be taken.

### **Cyberbullying or bullying outside the school premises**

We know that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites and this may impact them at school. The behaviour may be presented 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, prejudice or discrimination out with the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle these incidents outside of school
- Talk to the Head Teacher of any other school(s) whose pupils are allegedly presenting bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour
- Talk to the police, if appropriate

### **Recording and monitoring incidents of bullying**

In Ferryhill Primary School the designated member of SLT/ Equalities Co-ordinator will record all incidents in the Bullying and Equality module on SEEMIS. This will be done as soon as possible but within 3 days, in accordance with Edinburgh Council advice on recording and monitoring personal data.

The following information will be recorded:

- The person experiencing the behaviours
- The person displaying the behaviour
- The nature and category of the incident
- The perceived reason(s) for bullying
- Actions already taken and future actions
- Conclusions (being addresses, not resolved, unfounded)

All incidents should be recorded and should state whether the incident is bullying and/or prejudice-based, and the nature of this. If there is any dispute or doubt (on the part of any individual) about whether the incident was or was not bullying or prejudice, the incidents and doubts should be recorded.

Once concluded, the incident(s) should be closed off. Where an incident is found to be bullying, we will ensure that appropriate supports/interventions are in place for individuals/groups to address any underlying prejudice.

Recording incidents of bullying is one part of the overall processes in preventing and managing bullying incidents. Our focus for staff in school is on supporting changes in behaviour and promoting health and wellbeing.

The designated member of SLT/ Equalities Co-ordinator will ensure that this procedure is followed and monitor SEEMIS termly. Records of bullying, discrimination and prejudice-based incidents will be collected centrally from SEEMIS by the local authority from August 2020 on a termly basis.



### **Communicating this policy**

- We will advertise our anti-bullying, equality and diversity policy on the school web-site and through social media channels
- We teach all our pupils what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see another pupil being bullied
- We will take part in an annual anti-bullying week In November
- We will work with pupils and parents to produce short user-friendly versions of what we do about bullying and prejudice

### **Concerns and Feedback**

We recognise that there may be times when pupils or parents/carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying, discrimination and prejudice or a wider community issue. If a pupil or parent/carer feels that an incident/issue has not been fully resolved to their satisfaction, we ask them to contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

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 parents/carers can use the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service. We are also pleased to receive positive feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well. **At any time, a pupil or parent/carer can seek advice and support from an external organisation.**

### **Evaluating and reviewing this policy**

We will evaluate this policy using the following measures:

- The number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period
- Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying gathered through pupil voice groups and 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 3 years. Next review will take place in August 2026.**