

Morgan Academy

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that all children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse or neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 19

Scotland's Vision of anti-bullying for children and young people is that:

- 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 parent(s), will have the skills and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying appropriately;
- every child and young person who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available; and
- adults working with children and young people will follow a consistent and coherent approach in dealing

Respect for All : The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People, 2017

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the policy are:-

1. To raise the awareness of pupils, parents and staff regarding
 - a. the general nature of bullying
 - b. the identification of bullying and the bullies
 - c. the action to be taken by individuals
2. To encourage the whole school community to realise their responsibility in addressing the problem of bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying can be regarded as a mixture of behaviours and impacts which can influence a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. It can be repetitive, or isolated, intentional or unintentional behaviours that hurt, intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a person.

Respectme

Dundee City Council in consultation with pupils we asked them to consider how they would define bullying behaviour. Samples of responses are noted below:

- *Bullying behaviour is a hurtful or damaging situation caused by either a group or and individual.*
- *Bullying behaviour has various forms and various outcomes.*
- *Bullying behaviour may be continuous or not and can physically, mentally or emotionally harm another person.*
- *Bullying behaviour does not have to be “spoken words” but can be text or messages*
- *A hurtful or damaging situation caused by a group or individual*

Bullying behaviours may include:

- name calling, teasing or taunting
- ignoring/isolating/leaving out others and spreading rumours
- using multi-media or social networking sites to do any of the above via text message
- or email, sometimes known as cyber bullying
- hitting, tripping, kicking
- taking or damaging belongings
- making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied
- targeting someone because of who they are or are perceived to be

This is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours which can be classed as bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviours can be influenced by prejudice and may be based on the protected characteristics from the Equality Act (2010) which are :

- age*
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnerships*
- pregnancy and childbirth
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

(*Please note “ age “ and “ marriage and civil partnerships “ do not apply to learners in schools, but do apply for all adults in the school)

Morgan Academy also recognises that prejudice-based bullying may also be based on other personal characteristics including:

- body image
- additional support needs
- socio-economic status
- nationality
- language
- lifestyle choices such as what clothes they wear, what football team they support

At the end of this document, there is a list, which is not exhaustive, of more detailed characteristics of behaviour.

Bullying is not:

- children or young people falling out
- children or young people who do not get on with one another
- a one off fight between children or young people

Role of all Staff

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have a part to play in ensuring that bullying does not take place and being alert to incidents of bullying. Suspected incidences of bullying should be referred to the relevant PT Guidance in the first instance.

Role of Guidance Teacher

When Guidance Teachers meet with S1 classes in June during the P7 two-day visit, it should be stressed that bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated.

All instances of bullying referred by any teacher should be followed up as soon as possible. Both the person displaying and the person experiencing, should be interviewed, initially individually, then, if considered appropriate, together. All notes of allegations, meetings, interviews, actions and sanctions, if applicable, will be recorded for both person experiencing and person displaying in SEEMIS (as DCC policy).

Effective strategies for avoiding bullying should be devised (see Appendix 1).

Parents / guardians of both the person experiencing and person displaying should be informed that bullying has occurred, if deemed appropriate, and what action has been taken.

The House Head should be informed and will decide what sanction might be appropriate.

Role of House Head

It is the responsibility of the House Head to decide if a sanction will be issued for an incident of bullying and if so, what the sanction will be.

Role of Parents / Carers

The responsibilities of every parent/carer include:

- promoting good communication between themselves and their child about their child's learning and development
- informing the establishment of any incidents about which they are concerned
- being aware of current policy and procedures
- encouraging their child's regular attendance throughout any investigation
- giving appropriate guidance to their children and working in partnership with the establishment if issues arise.

Role of the Social Education Teacher / Curriculum

There are anti-bullying / respect themes in Social Education across all six years.

APPENDIX 1

Suggestions for a strategy against bullying

1. Meet with person or persons experiencing separately – have them write down what happened or make notes yourself.
2. Meet with the person displaying, or in the case of group involvement meet each person displaying separately.
3. Agree with each person displaying what is expected and discuss how he/she has broken the school guidelines.
4. If a group has been involved, meet the group and have each state what happened at your individual meeting. Ensure that everyone is clear about what happened.
5. Make clear to **all** students that all have a responsibility to counter bullying of any pupil – there are no innocent bystanders.
6. Talk to parents / guardians of all involved, if deemed appropriate. Inform them of all the information gathered.
7. All bullying to be recorded on the appropriate system.
8. Do not accept false excuses.
eg If the bullying was an accident, did the children act by helping the victim or getting help or giving sympathy?

If it was just a laugh, was everyone laughing?

If it was a game, was everyone enjoying it?
9. If serious injury results from bullying, suggest to the parents / guardians that they contact the police.

APPENDIX 2

Prejudice Based Bullying – from respectme

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to prejudice and discriminatory language or behaviour, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

Prejudice-based bullying is bullying behaviour motivated by prejudice, or 'perceived' to be motivated by prejudice, and can be based on any characteristic unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance. Research shows that anti-bullying work that clearly addresses the particular needs of vulnerable or minority groups is more effective. There is a need to address the root cause of prejudice as well as effectively responding to incidents as they arise.

We need to create environments where diversity is celebrated and name calling and comments based on prejudice are challenged.

Some personal characteristics are protected within the law, to address the years of unfavourable treatment experienced by some groups.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'. These are:

Age

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons.

Additional Support Needs: An additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

Age: Although prejudice and discrimination based on age is not applicable in school settings, it can affect children and young people in a variety of other settings. For example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

Body Image and Physical appearance: This can be hugely important to children and young people, with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact upon their wellbeing.

Disablist Bullying: People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision.

Gypsy/Travellers: This group of children and young people are a particularly discriminated against and marginalised group and concerns about bullying are especially acute for secondary schools. Perceived risks about bullying and parents' own experiences of discriminatory behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people, as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller families, such as Roma, may have similar concerns.

Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying: Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

Children and young people do not necessarily have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young people perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual young people; those that do not conform to gender norms and/or expectations; and those who have gay friends or family. Children with LGB parents may also experience homophobic bullying. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.

Intersectionality: Understanding the different and unequal social and economic outcomes for particular groups, based on interactions between race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and ethnicity. In the context of anti-bullying, it is important to understand the connection between the experiences of belonging to one or more of these groups and people's prejudice towards them, which can lead to inequality in attainment and wellbeing.

Looked After Children and Young People: Children and young people who are looked after at home or who are looked after and accommodated, are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons. It may be due to regular changes in schools or where they are placed, which can make forming friendships difficult. Forming relationships with peers and adults can be more difficult due to their early childhood adversity.

Marriage/Civil Partnership: Whilst it is unlikely that a school-aged pupil will be in a same sex marriage or civil partnership and directly experience prejudice and discrimination as a result, there could be instances of indirect discrimination. For example, if the child or young person is associated with someone (parent, sibling, etc) who is in a same sex marriage or civil partnership or in a same sex relationship. Marriage and civil partnership discrimination and prejudice can also affect children and young people in a variety of other settings, for example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

Racial Bullying: Children and young people from minority ethnic groups often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture as well as their skin colour and accent. The status of the ethnic group a child belongs to (or people assume they belong to) in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

Religion and Belief: Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may lead to bullying. People who have no religion or belief are also protected under the Equality Act.

Sectarianism: Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be. In Scotland, sectarianism is most often related to Protestant and Roman Catholic divisions within Christianity but can also relate to other religions, for example Sunni and Shia Muslims within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform Jews within Judaism.

Sexism and gender: Bullying in the form of derogatory language and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a 'real' man or a 'real' woman. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve the use of terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are not perceived to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying.

Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can lead to bullying because of the prejudice towards their perceived difference.

Gender Identity and Transphobic Bullying: The term 'transgender' is an 'umbrella term' for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, or an identity between or outside the two.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender or gender 'variant' children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways, including transphobic and homophobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

Young Carers: The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.

Socio-economic Prejudice: Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, accents, belongings, clothing, etc. can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

Hate Crime

Hate crime is defined through the law as a crime motivated by malice or ill-will towards individuals because of their actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. A hate crime can take a number of forms that are potentially criminal and should be treated as such. Adults and children and young people can seek appropriate advice and guidance from Police Scotland if they feel a hate crime may have taken place.

There is no legal definition of bullying in Scotland and as such bullying is not a crime. Bullying can be motivated by prejudice similar to hate crime, but the difference is when a crime has taken place, such as assault, graffiti or a breach of the peace which has been motivated by prejudice. The decision to proceed will rest with the Procurator Fiscal's Office. The presumption should be against criminalising children and young people wherever possible unless it is in the public interest.

Equality, Equity & Diversity

Equality is more than simply treating everyone the same. Not everyone needs exactly the same treatment; we are not all starting from the same place with the same privilege and support. There are people and groups of people who have experienced less favourable treatment and still do. Promoting equality involves challenging inequality. It means challenging language and behaviours that lead to people being treated less favourably, or having poorer outcomes at school or in life.

Equity is about addressing the imbalance and making sure those who need more help, support or protection can get it. When we do this, we are working towards equality. We strive for a society where people are treated fairly, which might mean taking extra steps to help those with less money get to school or college, making sure that those with a disability can access and enjoy the same places and experiences as everyone else, and so on. It is not enough to simply give everyone the same resources or tools to succeed, people may need ones that are specific to them and their circumstances to succeed.

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences. Diversity recognises difference, not just tolerating it, but acknowledging and celebrating the richness it can bring.

Fully integrating and embedding equity, equality and diversity into an organisation relies on a culture where language and behaviour is challenged. Creating environments where difference is celebrated, together with role modelling how to challenge prejudices, is what we sign up for if we work with or have children.

School Policy Updated January 2021 – D Anderson, DHT Support

Date of next review August 2023