



## BANCHORY-DEVENICK SCHOOL Anti-Bullying Policy



*"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle" Plato.*

### 1. Stance

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to providing a safe, healthy and thriving environment for all people in its educational establishments. At Banchory-Devenick School we actively promote the following school values:

- + Respect
- + Kindness
- + Responsibility
- + Teamwork
- + Resilience



We understand that bullying is **never** acceptable, and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment.

At Banchory-Devenick, the ongoing wellbeing of the children in our care is at the heart of everything that we do. We aim to create a positive and welcoming ethos and environment where all feel **S**afe, **H**ealthy, **A**ctive, **N**urtured, **A**chieving, **R**espected, **R**esponsible and **I**ncluded (**SHANARRI**). We are committed to *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* through ensuring



that we take a co-ordinated approach to supporting all children and families as and when they need it. We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, and we feel that promoting the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has enabled us to build strong, positive and open relationships across the school community which are based on mutual trust and respect.

### Aims of the Policy

- + Develop a shared definition of bullying across the whole school community.
- + Establish points of contact so that children, parents and staff feel confident that they know who to contact in the event of bullying incidents.
- + Build a common understanding of the strategies that are used by the school when dealing with bullying behaviours.
- + Reassure children and parents that bullying is never tolerated, and concerns are taken seriously and actioned accordingly.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Services Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **2. Definition of Bullying Behaviour**

*'Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out and it can happen face to face and online. Bullying is both behaviour and impact: what someone does and the impact it has on the other person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally,' (respectme, 2015).*

Bullying can be persistent or one-off. Behaviours can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened (face to face and/or online).
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked.
- Having belongings taken or damaged.
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face to face and/or online).
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone.
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives.
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online).

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

- Race, religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender or gender identity
- Additional support needs or disability.



Further to these protected characteristics, bullying behaviour can be related to prejudicial attitudes towards body image; social, economic and class status; young carers and children who are looked after.

It should be noted that there is a difference between bullying and other hurtful behaviour. Many disagreements do not constitute bullying behaviour but are instead individual incidents that still need addressing and dealing with.

## **3. Prevention and Reduction**

All members of the Banchory-Devenick School community have the right to feel safe and happy when they are at school, and the adults working with the children strive to ensure that each and every child is supported to reach their full potential.

Incidences of bullying are taken seriously, and it is the responsibility of the school community as a whole to take measures to prevent and tackle bullying, harassment or discrimination.

## Roles and Responsibilities



### Pupils:

- Know, understand and abide by the school Vision, Values and Aims.
- Respect and include all children and staff within our school community.
- Avoid participation in any kind of bullying behaviour: this includes being a bystander to any incidents of bullying.
- Be honest and truthful about incidents that happen and take responsibility for own actions.
- Talk to a trusted adult if they feel worried, upset or anxious and tell them what is happening.
- Speak to the trusted adult about how they would like to see their concerns dealt with/resolved.

### Parents/Carers

- Familiarise themselves with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy (accessed via the school website), and Aberdeenshire Council's Anti-Bullying Policy (see Appendix for link).
- Engage in positive dialogue with the school in order that the messages the pupils receive about bullying are consistent.
- Inform school staff if they have concerns regarding their child's behaviour or emotional wellbeing, and trust school staff to follow up their worries in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Encourage and advise their child to report any bullying behaviour to school staff.
- Encourage and advise their children **not** to retaliate to any forms of bullying behaviour.
- Co-operate with the school. If your child is accused of bullying behaviours, try to work together with school staff to ascertain the truth, and then, through restorative, solution focussed approaches, help them understand the implications of the bullying behaviours, from both their point of view and the point of view of the person being bullied.
- Monitor their child's online presence. If a parent has a concern that their child is being bullied or groomed through social media, they should report the incident to the social media site, block the site/comment, and/or contact Police Scotland.



### Staff:

- Follow the guidance and procedures detailed in this policy.
- Set a good example which promotes and models the school values and set up a class charter based on the school values at the start of each academic session.
- Adopt a consistent and equitable approach when dealing with pupils.
- Have high expectations of all pupils.
- Treat all pupils with respect, understanding and care.

- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviours and report suspected cases to the Head Teacher.
- Follow up any concern raised about bullying behaviour by setting a time to listen to the child and/or parent/carer to create an understanding of what is happening, where it is happening, who is involved and how the child is being affected. Work alongside the child and parent/carer as appropriate to form an action plan.
- Communicate relevant information to other school staff and enlist help and support as required.
- Contact parents of children involved as required.
- Monitor the situation.
- Set up single/multi-agency meetings as required. These may involve the Educational Psychologist, Health Professionals, Social Workers, Police Liaison Officers, Counselling Services etc.
- Record the issues in the appropriate place - Pastoral Notes or on SEEMiS.



#### Head Teacher

- Monitor the implementation of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Ensure that the school's Anti-Bullying Policy is relevant and up-to-date and reflects the ideas and opinions of the wider school community.
- Provide annual staff training for Child Protection, GIRFEC, Children's Rights etc in line with Aberdeenshire policy and expectation.
- Support pupil, parents/carers and staff in dealing with and resolving instances of bullying.
- Ensure that incidents of bullying are recorded appropriately.
- Promote the school's ongoing involvement with initiatives such as: SCARF Health and Wellbeing workshops, Rights Respecting Schools, Health Promoting Schools, Mindsafe Schools, Internet Safety, Police Liaison Presentations, Therapet etc.

#### **4. Communication**

Any episodes involving upset or injury to our children are by nature distressing, and bullying incidents always have the potential be explosive and emotive. No matter how we feel, we should always ensure that the best interests of the child are the top priority, and that all parties are seeking to understand what has happened so that situations can be resolved and supports can be put in place. It is therefore essential that communications between home and school are kept clear, calm, respectful, open and honest. After a bullying incident has been discussed and a plan actioned, parents and school staff should monitor from home and school respectively and communicate progress as agreed.

## 5. Response

Aberdeenshire schools promote a consistency of response to instances of bullying behaviour using the following 6-step approach as set out by the Council. This calls upon schools to:

- Record the incident.
- Speak to the individuals involved having frank and honest dialogue.
- Speak to parents.
- Utilise restorative approaches.
- Monitor the situation.
- Review and increase response accordingly.

## 6. Reporting and Monitoring

Records of bullying instances will be kept in the following places:

- ❖ Individual children's folders in Pastoral Notes (SEEMiS)
- ❖ The Bullying and Equalities (B&E) module (SEEMiS)

## Appendices

It is recommended that this document is read in conjunction with the following school policies which can be found on our school website:

- ✓ Safeguarding and Child Protection
- ✓ Rights Respecting Schools
- ✓ Vision, Values and Aims
- ✓ Positive Relationships and Behaviour Practice Statement

Useful websites given further information include:

- ✓ Aberdeenshire Council Anti-Bullying Policy - [Anti Bullying Policy and Guidance \(aberdeenshire.gov.uk\)](http://aberdeenshire.gov.uk)
- ✓ respectme - [respectme | Scotland's anti-bullying service](http://respectme | Scotland's anti-bullying service)
- ✓ Respect for All - [Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- ✓ GIRFEC - [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- ✓ United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - [The Convention on the Rights of the Child: The children's version | UNICEF](http://www.unicef.org)

