**Annbank Primary School & EYC**



**Anti-Bullying Policy**



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**INTRODUCTION**

*“Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on the person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term 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.”*

respect me, 2015

The purpose of this policy is to support the development of a positive, respectful and supportive environment in all South Ayrshire schools, but with particular reference to Annbank primary and Early Years centre.

To this end, South Ayrshire Council recognises that bullying and prejudiced based bullying is often a combination of behaviours that impact negatively on a young person’s wellbeing and capacity to learn. This policy is intended to provide guidance to all stakeholders in the management of bullying behaviours that prevent young people feeling safe, included, responsible, respected, active, nurtured, achieving and healthy and from reaching their full potential.

This policy also recognises that when instances of bullying do arise, we, as a school must act quickly to address the impact on both those who experience and those who display bullying behaviour.

**STATEMENT OF INTENT FROM SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

The aims and objectives of South Ayrshire Council in formulating this statement are:

* To reduce and eradicate wherever possible instances in which pupils are subjected to bullying in any form
* To establish appropriate procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying in all our schools
* To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of their school policy and fulfil their obligations to it

**DEFINITION**

In Scotland, we describe bullying as behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or demeaned.

Bullying is defined by its impact on the person/people affected as a result of the intended or unintended behaviour and actions of others. Bullying behaviour impacts on the wellbeing of those affected and results in a reduced sense of self-esteem and a negative impact on wellbeing. Bullying behaviour is typically characterised by the individual’s involved perceiving difference between themselves and others.

 Bullying can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidating behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can be bullied on the grounds of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion or other real or perceived difference.

 Bullying can be subtle or it can be overt. It can cause short-term suffering for the pupil who experiences bullying behaviour or it can have long-term effects.

**BULLYING BEHAVIOUR CAN INCLUDE:**

* Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face 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 or online
* Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phones
* Behaviour which makes children or young people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives either face to face or online
* Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be either face to face or online

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to a perceived and actual difference. This can lead to behaviour and language that could manifest into racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith. Prejudice based bullying can be based on any circumstances such as their appearance or socio-economic background.

**RESPONDING TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

* Staff must use their knowledge of the children and young people and use their professional judgement when responding to incidents based on evidence and investigation.
* When a young person claims to have been experiencing bullying behaviour, it is ultimately crucial that each complaint is investigated swiftly and with a consistent approach. How the person who has experienced bullying behaviour perceives his/her situation is important and must be taken seriously, so as to avoid short or long-term damage to the child or young person and to his/her feelings of self-esteem, self-worth and value. Bullying behaviour can be one-off or repeated incidents. Both types can have a negative impact.
* Impartiality and confidentiality must be respected, with knowledge of the incident being limited to those directly involved with the incident and with any necessary action that follows. It is important not to label children and young people as ‘bullies’ or ‘victims’. Labels can isolate a child, rather than help them to recover or alter their behaviour.
* Inform Head Teacher or other designated member of staff at the earliest opportunity.
* Record reported and/or witnessed incidents in the Bullying and Equalities Module in within the SEEMiS system, regardless of the outcome.
* Assess as to whether or not immediate remedial action can be taken to resolve the situation. This can be achieved through peer mediation, or through a system whereby vulnerable children and young people receive support as part of a friendship group. If this is successful, record in young person’s pastoral notes. If this is not possible, a wider investigation is required.
* Decide with the Named Person and in consultation with the child or young person if parents/carers are to be informed. Any decision to inform the parent should involve the child or young person and take into account informal advice from the named person or member of staff who is trusted by the child or young person. If the incident constitutes a child protection issue, child protection procedures should be evoked.
* Consider if involvement of other agencies would be beneficial in supporting the needs of the young person.
* Actions by the children and young people involved in bullying behaviours may lead to exclusion and the nature of the incident shall be identified on the exclusion form
* Should parents exercise their right to take further a complaint then they should follow South Ayrshire’s “*Listening to You*” complaints procedure.

**EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITES OF ANNBANK PRIMARY AND EARLY YEARS CENTRE STAFF**

South Ayrshire Council share the following values and Annbank Primary and Early Years Centre is committed to establishing a culture where:

* All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it its delivered or what excuses are given to justify it
* All stakeholders are valued and have a responsibility to promote respect, openness, honesty and understanding
* All staff recognise the detrimental effect in pupils who may be subject to bullying and will work actively to minimise the risks
* The harmful effect on pupil performance which can be occasioned by bullying is recognised and our school is committed to investigating and combating all bullying behaviour
* Our school will ensure that key staff undergo suicide prevention training, so as to be well equipped in the appropriate language required to assess risk and support all children and young people
* Our school staff will regularly monitor and ensure training of all staff about bullying behaviour and responding to bullying.
* All incidents of bullying reported or witnessed are recorded as soon as possible and responded to in accordance with anti-bullying policies, with actions taken and outcomes being recorded.
* School staff will liaise, as deemed necessary, with outside agencies to address the needs of individuals.
* Provide appropriate annual data when requested by the Director of Educational Services.

**EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

* Follow guidance detailed within the school’s anti-bullying policy.
* Participate in any consultation regarding anti-bullying.
* Treat your peers with respect.
* If you think you are being bullied seek help by confiding in someone you trust.
* Discuss and agree what options are available.
* If the bullying is online there are many useful strategies that can be used. School staff are well trained to offer support and guidance on this subject.
* Be aware of what you post and share online, and treat people with the same respect as you would if they were in the room.
* If you see someone else being bullied report it to a trusted adult.

**EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS AND CARERS**

* Familiarise yourself with the schools anti-bullying policy.
* Participate in any consultation regarding anti-bullying.
* Attend any training offered on anti-bullying.
* Actively listen to your child or young person when they tell you about a suspected bullying incident.
* Stay calm.
* Take a lead from your child or young person as to what pace to go at. This will help restore their feeling of being in control.
* Ask them what they want you to do.
* Explore options together; there is never one single answer.
* Telling children or young people to ‘hit back’ is a common response but not necessarily the best or safest option.
* Contact the school and ask for an appointment.
* Work in partnership with the school to resolve the situation. Don’t expect the situation to be fully resolved at the first meeting, that won’t always be possible.
* Keep channels of communication open until the situation is resolved.

**PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

Annbank Primary and Early Years Centre will endeavour to create and maintain a caring, positive and supportive ethos. In our school, anti-bullying messages will be reinforced through the following prevention measures:

* Anti-bullying week activities, with the clear message being communicated to staff, children and young people and parents/carers, that bullying behaviour shall not be tolerated.
* Assemblies, with the emphasis on the power of acts of kindness to improve the lives of others. Conversely, children and young people shall be educated on the negative impact of bullying.
* Support, guidance and training from Allison Milloy, Police Scotland Campus Officer
* Drama/Musical theatre anti-bullying workshops developed by the staff and children and young people, or implemented by an outside drama group.
* Posters produced by children and young people in school, as well as by professional bodies.
* Newsletters/website pages.
* Handbook information.
* Nurture group resilience and anti-bullying themes.
* UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools GOLD accreditation and the principles taught therein.
* Curricular inputs/PSE

**EVALUATION MEASURES**

In order for schools to assess the effectiveness of their policy the following measures should be applied:

* Analysis over a given period of the number of reported incidents
* Individual report returns, including nil returns, within given periods for different age/class/year groups
* Analysis of the number of pupil days lost which may have arisen as a consequence of bullying
* Any marked improvements in bullying performance and attributed to the eradication of bullying behaviour

**RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARD**

Annbank Primary School is a GOLD Rights Respecting School. The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school’s planning, policies, practice and ethos. A rights-respecting school not only teaches about children’s rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationship between teachers and pupils.

**Bullying is a Breach of Children’s Rights.**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of a school’s planning, policies, practice and ethos.

The UNCRC, article 2 states (without discrimination):

“*the convention applies to every child whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, no matter what type of family they come from*.”

Under the UNCRC, all children and young people have the right not to be discriminated against or treated unfairly; to be treated in their best interests and to have their rights respected, protected and fulfilled. Children and young people have the right to say what they think and have their opinions taken into account; to get and share information and to think and believe what they want, as long as this is not damaging to others. Children and young people have a right to meet together and join groups as long as they do not stop others.

They have a right to respect their rights, freedoms and reputations. They should have a right to privacy and protection from attacks against their way of life, good name, families and homes; and they have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically and mentally. Children and young people have a right to an education which encourages children to respect their own and other cultures.

Bullying behaviour goes against many of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child articles and may prevent children and young people from enjoying their full rights and developing their full potential in learning and in life.

In South Ayrshire, and within Annbank Primary and Early Years Centre, we believe Education is an environment where children and young people’s dignity should be respected at all times and where personality, talents and abilities should be encouraged to shine and be celebrated.

Being a Rights Respecting School supports a rich learning environment that places the best interests of the child at the heart of all our policy and practice. In each classroom there is a Charter on display to remind children and young people of their rights.

**SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE REGARDING ONLINE BULLYING**

The following information is sourced from content from respectme, Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service, website.

**What is online bullying?**

Online bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging and social networking websites. Texts, messages or images are sent or posted on sites, which hurt, intimidate or embarrass another person. The identity of the person carrying out the online bullying can be hidden from the person targeted. Online bullying is no different from any other forms of bullying behaviour; the behaviour is the same and the impact is no less devastating. Advances in technology are simply providing an alternative means of reaching people.

For children and young people the internet is something that allows them to connect with friends and other children and young people at any time of the day or night. This means that online bullying can happen virtually anywhere, and is no longer confined to the classroom or playground. Children and young people can be targeted in their own homes, in their bedrooms and personal spaces where they should feel safe and protected.

Most children and young people do use technology responsibly. Disconnecting mobile phones or the internet will not make bullying behaviour stop. **All adults** need to take an active interest in the way technology is being used by children and young people and connect with them at home, at school, and in our communities.

**Mobile phones**

Most people are familiar with the use of mobile phones and the ability to send and receive text messages, but the additional features that many mobiles have these days, such as picture messaging and video recording, provide an additional way of communicating. Bluetooth technology also provides a way of connecting and exchanging information between mobile phones, laptops, PCs, printers, digital cameras, and video game consoles. This makes it much easier for large groups of people to view information in a very short space of time.

**Social networking sites**

Social networking websites are increasingly being used by children and young people (and indeed by many adults) as a key way of communicating and building relationships, or making new friends online. Sites such as Facebook are online ‘communities' of people who share interests and activities, and communicate through the use of messages, videos, discussion groups and blogs, which are similar to online diaries. It is a place where people can create a personal network that connects them to other users.

**What to do if a child says they are being bullied online**

Children and young people often report they are reluctant to tell an adult that they are being bullied online because they believe that the adult will over-react. For children and young people this would mean having access to their mobile phone or their computer taken away. Assure them that they have done the right thing by telling you; it can be difficult for children and young people to recognise that they are being bullied online.

To support the child or young person it is important to understand what you are both dealing with.

There are some questions you can ask to find out more about what has been going on:

* What has been said?
* Who has been saying it?
* How long has it been going on?
* Has the online bullying been accompanied by bullying behaviour in ‘real' life?
* What have they tried to do about it already?
* How has it been making them feel/how has it been affecting them?
* Have they been storing/keeping any of the bullying messages?
* What else has happened since it started (has anyone ‘hacked' into their page or posed as them online?)
* Are there any images/photos/videos involved?

**Decide a plan of action with the child or young person**

It is vital that the child or young person feels involved and experiences an element of control about the steps that will be taken to address the bullying behaviour.

Schools should inform parents when online bullying is reported. The steps that parents or schools in consultation with parents may consider taking are:

**Going through any messages that they have received and kept**

If you feel that any of these messages can be construed as illegal then keep copies, dates, times, email addresses or phone numbers and take them to the police.

You may consider asking them not to open any further online or text messages from these addresses and phone numbers, but to allow you to open them instead.

You might want to reply to these messages but be very careful not to respond in a manner which could be seen as threatening or harassing. It may be enough to respond saying that you are an adult and that the messages they are sending are hurtful, causing you and the young person concern, they could be against the law and that they should stop sending them.

**Changing their mobile phone number**

It is important that they know not to give their mobile number away to people that they do not trust. If the new number falls into the wrong hands again it may not be because they have been careless, but that they have given the number to someone they trusted who has then passed it on to others.

**Changing their online profile**

Log-in names and profiles on social networking sites can be changed easily and the child/young person should be reminded, as above, only to accept trusted real life friends as online friends.

Personal and identifying details should be kept to a minimum. Pages can be made private so they are only shared with friends, and are not public and available for anyone to see. Designs or cartoon characters can be used instead of photographs and nicknames can be used instead of real names.

**Involving other agencies**

When the online bullying is being carried out by someone that they know and see on a regular basis, it might be worth involving other agencies.

**Supporting the child/young person**

It is important to recognise that because they have been bullied online, they will need the same support as they would if they had experienced any other type of bullying behaviour. This support, and their experience of how bullying behaviour is addressed and resolved, begins as soon as they tell you that they are being bullied.

**What to do if you discover that a child is bullying others online**

It can be distressing to discover that a child or young person has been bullying someone, regardless of what form that bullying behaviour has taken, but it is important that you remain calm. All behaviour communicates feeling. Are they being encouraged to join in with bullying behaviour and they just do it to stay part of that group? Are they looking for attention and this is their way of getting it? Are they unhappy with some other aspect of their life and they are taking out their frustration on this person? Be prepared to deal with prejudiced attitudes. The behaviour behind the bullying behaviour might stem from racism, homophobia or ignorance about a different culture or religion. Do not label the child or young person a ‘bully'. Talk about the behaviour behind the bullying and why it is unacceptable.

Bullying behaviour is never acceptable. Try to get them to understand the impact that their behaviour will be having on the health and well-being of the other person. How would they feel if someone was posting malicious messages about them on websites or sending them threatening text messages when they were in their ‘safety' of their own home? How would they like to experience a knot in their stomach every time they receive a text message or email?

Explain that all bullying behaviour carries consequences and they could get into serious trouble, resulting in a criminal record. There are laws surrounding the use of mobile phones and the internet and it could be that their behaviour is contravening one of these laws.

Agree what you are going to do to stop the bullying behaviour. You should alert the parent or carer of the other person involved to make sure they are aware of what has been happening and to ensure that the person being bullied gets any support that they need. It is also important to get support for the person exhibiting the bullying behaviour. Revisit the reasons behind their bullying behaviour and identify the best way of dealing with this.

There might be another adult or older sibling that they would feel comfortable talking to. There are also a number of organisations who offer a counselling service, including:

The Bullying Line - 0800 44 1111 and Childline - 0800 1111

ParentLine Scotland also offers a counselling service for adults - 0808 800 2222.

**Reporting Inappropriate Messages**

The vast majority of responsible social networking sites provide tools for users to manage their own profile. This includes giving users the ability to make their profile ‘private', delete messages if they find them to be nasty, offensive or they just do not want them to appear on their page, they can effectively deny access to people formerly regarded as ‘friends' from seeing, reading, commenting on or posting messages to their page.

The ‘report abuse’ tool allows users to report any content, postings or comments that appear on their own page or other sites that they think contravene the terms and conditions of the site or which they consider to be illegal, offensive, harassing or bullying in nature.

Social networking sites rely on users making use of these tools to effectively ‘police' the site as they do not have the capacity to monitor each and every profile every day. In general, they advise that nasty comments are ignored and deleted unless they are threatening or illegal, in which case they should be reported to the site administrators and, where applicable, the police.

All members of social networking sites are encouraged to take responsibility for the content of their own page, and to use all available measures to reduce public access to their profile.

**Text Bullying**

As with social networking sites, responsible mobile phone providers will support people to stop text bullying. Any nasty or abusive texts should be saved as evidence for the provider. Numbers can be blocked from your phone so that you no longer receive texts, messages or calls from that number. In some cases the police will be able to help, but often they will need evidence of the number and will want to see the texts, so they must be saved.

Responsible mobile phone operators are taking steps to help tackle online bullying. Each phone operator should have a number to ring to report phone bullying.

**Online bullying and the Law**

When mobile phone and internet technology is abused, or used to harass or threaten others, there may be legal consequences.

**The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016**

This is new legislation. Should a young person decide to pursue legal redress for image sharing without consent the Act would apply

**POLICY OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Annbank Primary and Early Years Centre’s anti bullying policy should be regarded as a “living” document and as such will be periodically reviewed and updated.

The ultimate responsibility for the introduction and implementation of the school policy will rest with the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team. However, it is important to remember that all staff, pupils and parents have an active part to play in the evolution, development and maintenance of the policy.

The aim of South Ayrshire Council is to ensure that all its school provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear.



**Article 15** (freedom of association) Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Artilce 28 Every child has the right to an education. Primary Education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children’s dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

**Article 29** (goals of education) Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.