



**East Lothian
Council**

Resources & People Services (Education)

Respect for All

Anti-Bullying Policy

June 2017

**getting
it right**
for every child

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Respect for All

East Lothian Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

East Lothian Council is committed to creating and sustaining a safe, positive and inclusive environment where respect is shown to and is given by all of its children, young people, staff and parents/carers. Positive relationships are central to developing and maintaining inclusive environments.

Every child and young person in East Lothian has the right to grow up free from bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying and experience a learning environment which welcomes diversity and nurtures respect for all. East Lothian Council is therefore committed to protecting children and young people from all forms of bullying.

This commitment is consistent with the policy of the Scottish Government as outlined in the National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2010) and is supported by the work of **respectme**, Scotland's national anti-bullying service. The context of this policy in relation to other national and local policies can be found in Appendix 1.

In addition to ensuring this policy is in line with the National Policy the views of children and young people, parents/carers and staff across East Lothian were sought through initial consultation with stakeholders in order to identify key issues and further consultation on the draft policy to ensure the policy meets local need.

1 Policy Statement

East Lothian Council aims to:

Reduce and wherever possible, prevent the instances of bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying in all our educational establishments.

Ensure that all those who play a role in the lives of children and young people are enabled to promote positive relationships and respond effectively to all forms of bullying behaviour.

Ensure systems are in place to care for and support all those involved in bullying behaviour, as well as ensuring children and young people can report incidents in the knowledge that they will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Actively seek the involvement of children, young people, parents/carers and staff in the continuing development of social behaviour and emotional literacy which supports the growth of a positive ethos.

Ensure that there is an effective system of recording incidents of bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying within all educational establishments.

Use information concerning bullying incidents to monitor, evaluate and report on the effectiveness of this policy.

2 Policy in Practice

All key stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring the effectiveness of this policy. This is only possible if we have an agreed definition of bullying behaviour and clear guidelines regarding roles and responsibilities.

2.1 Definition of Bullying Behaviour

In line with the Scottish Government and **respectme**, we define bullying as ‘a mixture of behaviours which can impact on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. Bullying behaviour takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out’.

For the purposes of this document bullying behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you
- Receiving abusive messages on social media or electronic communication

- Behaviour which causes people to feel like they are not in control of themselves
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be

This behaviour can harm people physically and/or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. Bullying is both behaviour and impact. (respectme 2015)

Prejudice-base bullying

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice. Prejudice-based bullying can be based on any characteristic unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance: **some of these characteristics are protected by law.** Research recommends that only by embedding all protected characteristics across learning will children, young people and the adults have the language, understanding and confidence to respond to prejudice-based bullying effectively.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out that it is unlawful to discriminate against a person because of the following personal characteristics –

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race. This includes colour, ethnic / national origin or nationality.
- Sex
- Religion or belief. The Act covers any religion, religious or non-religious beliefs
- Sexual orientation

Please see Appendix 2 for more detail on these and other forms of prejudice-based bullying.

Online Bullying

'Online bullying shouldn't be treated differently. Online bullying, or 'cyberbullying' as it often referred to, is the same type of bullying behaviour but it takes place online, usually on social networking sites and online gaming platforms. A person can be called names, threatened or have rumours spread about them and this can (like other behaviours) happen in person and online. Online is where the bullying is happening, it is not what is happening. We address online bullying effectively when we address it as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy.' (respectme 2016)

East Lothian Council recognises that new digital technologies (such as smart phones, computers and tablets) and online applications (such as gaming and social networks) are constantly being developed. It, therefore, wants to see all policies and practice include advice on online bullying and is committed to:

- Supporting children and young people to use electronic technology and the internet, safely and responsibly.
- Help children and young people understand the implications and potential criminality of displaying bullying behaviour and or images via social media or electronic communication.
- Providing training and support to children and young people on what to do if they experience bullying behaviour online. This is carried out via programmes on the safe and positive use of digital technologies in schools. Similar programmes are also available to parents in East Lothian.
- Remaining up to date with latest changes and trends of how digital technology is being used by children and young people in order to be able to provide relevant support.

Responsibilities

2.2 Local Authority Education Staff;

Embed this policy through training and monitoring.

Consult with stakeholders about the effectiveness and further development of the policy.

Share good practice.

Ensure initial training for Head Teachers.

Provide advice to Head Teachers.

Work with partner agencies to support the prevention and reduction of bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying.

Provide clear guidelines on recording and reporting of incidents.

Regularly review the policy to take into account new developments in technology or legislation at a minimum of every 3 years.

2.3 School/Establishment Senior Management;

Ensure the policy is implemented and is communicated to all staff, students, parents/carers and partners.

Ensure the policy is embedded and reviewed in the School Improvement Plan and is linked with targets for the school's Health and Wellbeing framework.

Ensure staff development activities are available.

Ensure staff are fully aware of the importance of the policy and create a climate of respect and positive relationships and a culture where bullying behaviour is not accepted.

Ensure bullying incidents are recorded and monitored in line with council policy.

Provide appropriate training and support on anti-bullying to all staff, students, parents/carers and partners.

Regularly review policy to take into account new developments in technology or legislation at a minimum of every 3 years.

2.4 Individual staff;

Contribute to a positive school ethos through modelling appropriate behaviour (online and offline) and actively supporting and celebrating diversity.

Be aware of the policy and understand the procedures for managing incidents and supporting and managing children and young people who have been involved in bullying incidents.

Keep relevant colleagues informed of significant information concerning individual pupils as appropriate

Deal promptly and effectively with all allegations of bullying.

Promote digital citizenship and the appropriate, responsible and positive use of digital technologies as an integral part of maintaining positive relationships.

Self-evaluate practice in relation to the anti-bullying policy within the Professional Review and Development process.

Communicate with parents/carers promptly where possible and appropriate.

Through the curriculum and related activities, build the capacity of children and young people to understand and challenge bullying behaviour.

2.5 Children and Young People;

Continue to learn about and develop positive relationships and attitudes and challenge bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying if they feel able to do so.

Tell a trusted person if they have any worries about bullying behaviour.

Keep themselves and others safe with the support of adults if needed.

Actively engage in learning about bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying and consider the role they can play in preventing it and supporting those who may be impacted by it.

Engage in safe, responsible use of social media and digital technologies such as smart phones, computers and tablets to build a clear understanding of how we should act online.

2.6 Parents and Carers will;

Continue to promote and model positive social skills and emotional literacy for their children and young people.

Encourage and model safe and responsible use of social media and digital technologies such as smart phones, computers and tablets.

Communicate respectfully any concerns to relevant staff.

Work in partnership with other stakeholders to implement policy.

3 Managing Incidents

The recording and monitoring of instances of bullying behaviour and prejudice-based bullying is essential to enable the local authority and schools/educational establishments to self-evaluate impact in relation to;

1. Monitor incident response and follow-up action.
2. Identify any reoccurrence of incidents and patterns of behaviour.
3. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy.
4. Identify future training needs.

East Lothian Council aims to ensure that individual incidences of bullying behaviour will be dealt with consistently and in a constructive and fair manner.

It is the role of staff to:

- listen
- explore thoughts and feelings
- explore the impact and

Bullying Behaviour/Prejudice-Based Behaviour

The outcome of the investigation will be reported to the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team in both Primary and Secondary Schools. The incident will be dealt with as such and recorded on the Bullying Behaviour/Prejudice-Based Bullying Incident Record either directly on to SEEMIS or using the paper format and then uploaded.

Racial Incident

The outcome of the investigation will be reported to the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team in both Primary and Secondary Schools. The incident will be dealt with as such and recorded as a racial incident on SEEMIS

Behaviour but no impact

Behaviour will be dealt with in line with the school /establishment positive behaviour policy and recorded accordingly.

Perceived bullying behaviour where there is no evidence

Support will be offered to individual/s making the allegation and recorded in pastoral notes.

Step 5

The appropriate member of the Senior Management Team in both Primary and Secondary Schools (or delegated member of staff) will ensure the Monitoring and Conclusion section of the Bullying/Equalities Incident Form is completed and uploaded on to SEEMIS.

Monitoring and Review

The school Senior Management Team will be able to produce reports from the information collated on SEEMIS Vision. It is recommended this is done at least on an annual basis to help inform School Improvement Plans.

The local authority Lead Officer responsible for Inclusion and Equality will also use this information to assess the effectiveness of the current policy and update it accordingly.

Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been screened using the East Lothian Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

Policy Context

A number of policy documents are in place to support, protect and encourage children and young people to lead happy and successful lives. This policy operates within these and under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and 2009
- Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Equalities Act 2010
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Part 1
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Early Years Framework
- National Care Standards
- Equally Well
- National Improvement Framework

The policy contributes to:

- The Scottish Government's National Outcome 4 – 'Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens'.
- The Scottish Government's National Outcome 5 – 'Our Children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed'.
- The Scottish Government's National Outcome 9 - 'We live our lives safe from crime, danger and disorder'.
- The East Lothian Plan (SOA) 2013 – 23 Point 4 - "East Lothian's young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens".
- The East Lothian Plan (SOA) 2013 – 23 - Point 5 – "East Lothian's children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed".
- The East Lothian Plan (SOA) 2013 – 23 - Point 6 – "In East Lothian we live healthier, more active lives".
- The East Lothian Plan (SOA) 2013 – 23 - Point 7 – "East Lothian is an even safer place".

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: When unwanted conduct related to age has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying behaviour 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 behaviour to go undetected and be ongoing.

Body Image and Physical appearance: This can be hugely important to children and young people as it has the potential to negatively impact on their wellbeing.

Disablist Bullying: People who display bullying behaviour towards 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 behaviour. 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 behaviour are especially acute for secondary school pupils. Perceived risks about bullying behaviour 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.

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 behaviour. This can manifest in many ways including transphobic and homophobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying behaviour as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

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 experience of belonging to one or more of these groups and people's prejudice towards them, 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 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 behaviour 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 behaviour. People who have no religion or belief are also protected under the Equality Act.

Sectarianism: Sectarianism is sometimes associated 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 behaviour 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 using 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 behaviour.

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

Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying: Bullying behaviour 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 behaviour 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 behaviour. Although homophobic bullying behaviour is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying behaviour, it is related to these forms of bullying behaviour through underlying sexist attitudes.

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 behaviour 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 behaviour 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 and clothing, etc. can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group. Bullying behaviour towards children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

Source: *respectme* Training Toolkit