



**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

- help the child or young person feel safer

All staff should be aware of this policy and its appendices which include a staff information booklet and links to **respectme** information for parents/carers, children and young people.

To ensure consistency across all East Lothian schools/educational establishments will record incidents on SEEMIS. (See Appendix VI for guidance notes).

It will be the responsibility of individual schools to decide who will input this data. A suggested protocol is outlined below.

Protocol

Step 1

When an alleged incident of bullying behaviour is reported it will be taken seriously.

The person making the allegation (child/young person experiencing the bullying, witness, parent/carer) will be reminded of the definition of bullying and supported through the procedure. Basic details should be recorded on SEEMIS.

Step 2

If the alleged incident cannot be dealt with effectively 'there and then' and requires further investigation, the initial member of staff will liaise with colleagues to confirm who is best placed to undertake the investigation.

Where further investigation is required the incident must be referred to

Primary Sector:	Member of the Senior Management Team
Secondary Sector:	Guidance Teacher/Faculty Head/Senior Management Team/Duty Manager as appropriate.

Step 3

Where a further investigation is being undertaken, parents/carers of those directly involved in an incident will be contacted and updated by the person undertaking the investigation

Step 4

Any incident will be investigated promptly by a member of the Senior Management Team in both Primary and Secondary Schools (or a delegated member of staff) by the School Management Team. A decision will be made based on evidence as to whether bullying behaviour occurred or not. Where an incident of bullying behaviour is found to have occurred the outcome of the investigation will indicate one or more of the following.

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 (Appendix VII) 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 (See Appendix VII for guidance notes). 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.