



Bo'ness Academy's Equalities and Anti-Bullying Policy 2023

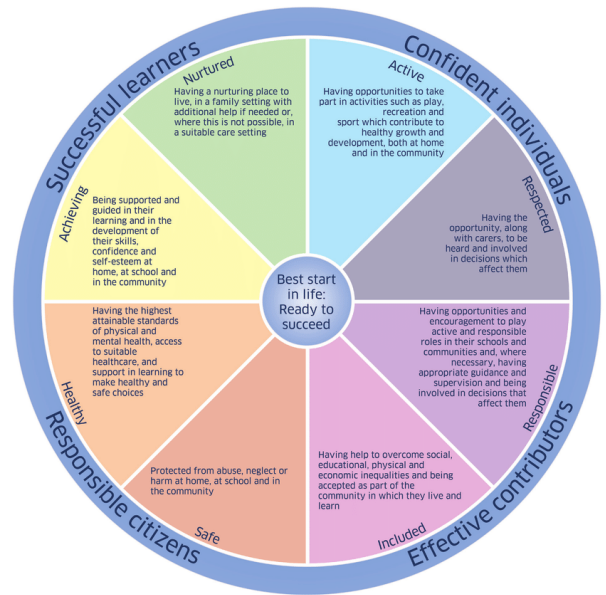




Rationale

Falkirk Council is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments. Here at Bo'ness Academy our values are **Aspiration, Motivation and Respect**. We understand that bullying is never acceptable and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment.

We recognise bullying as a breach of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the heart of our anti-bullying policy reflects the importance of the rights each individual has.



Article 2: Children have the right to be protected against discrimination.

Article 19: Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

Article 29: Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others' human rights and their own and other cultures.

This policy has been revised and updated in consultation with staff, parent and pupil groups and reflects *Respectme* guidance, Promoting Positive Relationships in Falkirk's Educational Establishments (Falkirk Council's Education Department's Anti-Bullying Support Policy) and the legal framework which underpins Education in Scotland: UNCRC, GIRFEC, Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014, Curriculum for Excellence, Education Scotland Act 2016 and Equality Act 2010.

In line with *Respectme* policy, all bullying incidents will be reviewed individually and our anti-bullying policies are reviewed every three years.

We have also created a pupil friendly version of this policy and a visual interpretation.





What is bullying behaviour?

In Scotland, bullying is defined as:

"Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as 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" (respectme, 2015)

Bullying can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidating behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can be on the receiving end of bullying behaviour for a number of reasons, as identified in the Equality Act 2010, including: age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, nationality or religion. Any bullying related to these characteristics is unacceptable in our school community, please refer to Falkirk Council's Promoting Positive Relationships (Anti-Bullying Policy) page 7 for further information on prejudice-based bullying.

We asked children and young people what they constitute as bullying behaviour, and they said **bullying behaviour can include:**

- Being called names, being teased, being put down or threatened (face-to-face and/or online)
- Being hit, tripped or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, being 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 phones
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online)
- Being targeted for who you are perceived to be (face-to-face and/or online)
- Transphobia
- Homophobia





Impact of Bullying Behaviours can include:

Bullying behaviours can have a range of impacts upon the pupil and indeed their household. Below are some examples of such impacts:

- Poor school attendance
- Eating disorders
- Loss of self-esteem
- Wellbeing concerns
- Increasing sense of social isolation
- Violence towards others
- Limited aspirations
- Anxiety
- Self-harm
- Depression
- Suicide



Responsibilities and Expectations

'The most successful way to address bullying is to create a positive school ethos and culture ... Robust anti-bullying policy matched by consistent, predictable practice will help to create safe environments where bullying cannot thrive.' (Respectme, 2015)

When young people display signs of distress, we aim to deal with them empathetically with a view to understanding the thoughts and feelings behind their behaviour while promoting the principles of social justice. We aim to promote positive relationships and mutual respect amongst our young people, staff and parents/carers, and manage any situation that does arise in a restorative and supportive manner. Everyone in our school community has a responsibility towards the welfare of others.

We asked children and young people and they said they wanted "*specific anti-bullying staff*" and "*use of digital technology to report bullying incidents*". This will be taken forward and implemented into our school improvement planning.





Responsibilities of all pupils:

- Encourage and support one another to create a positive, friendly, welcoming ethos where bullying behaviour is not tolerated
- Help ensure everyone feels valued and respected and celebrate differences rather than targeting those who are different
- Report any instances of bullying or concerns to staff in the first instance either in person or via the QR code
- Use social media in a safe and responsible way
- Work with the class teacher and Pastoral / Pupil Support teacher to resolve the issue
- Be receptive to advice and feedback
- Discuss various courses of action to reach an amicable solution
- Participate in anti-bullying campaigns, posters and assemblies to raise awareness

Responsibilities of all parents/carers:

- Support the school values of **aspiration, motivation and respect** and our anti-bullying policy and procedures including any consequences or supports which are decided by the school
- Help foster an open pathway of communication between the school and home so we can work together to support young people
- Help raise awareness of the importance of encouraging a positive and inclusive ethos within the school and beyond
- Encourage your child to use social media safely and maturely, and monitor their online activity
- Contact the school if you have concerns and treat the incident seriously
- Work with the child and Pastoral / Pupil Support teacher to resolve the issue
- Treat staff with respect when addressing the issue

Responsibilities of all school staff:

- Treat all allegations of bullying seriously
- Report all incidents to the relevant Pastoral / Pupil Support teacher via OTB for investigation
- Display a clear commitment to promoting and role modelling positive relationships and positive behaviour at all times
- Provide an environment where all young people feel safe, welcome and included
- Foster an ethos of inclusion and promote positive attitudes and praise in the classroom
- Actively involve children in promoting positive behaviour and encourage and support them in developing the necessary skills and coping strategies
- Be vigilant and look out for unusual behavioural trends
- Provide support and guidance for those involved in bullying behaviour with the aim to change behaviours positively





- Encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying behaviour against themselves or others
- Engage in restorative approaches and solution focused approaches to ensure that all children are treated fairly and equally
- Follow council and school policies regarding recording, monitoring and responding to incidents
- Keep up to date with research and national agenda surrounding bullying
- Engage with effective learning and teaching resources, for example, 'Respectme'

Reporting, Recording and Monitoring

Reporting:

Pupils are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying to their Pastoral / Pupil Support Teacher. Following consultation with the pupils a more discreet method was provided using a QR code. This code allows pupils a direct method to report any bullying (Appendix 1).

If a parent would like to report any incident of bullying, they should contact their child's Pastoral / Pupil Support Teacher by contacting the school office (01506 822028).

Recording and Monitoring:

All instances of bullying will be recorded using our school information system (OTB). Any instances of bullying that falls under the Equality Act 2010 will also be recorded and monitored separately using SEEMIS (Equalities Module).

A regular review of all alleged bullying reports will be undertaken by Pastoral Staff. This will lead to appropriate action being taken if necessary. A review of the strategies used to raise awareness regarding anti-bullying and to prevent bullying taking place will be conducted annually.

Support

We recognise the impact that bullying can have and we aim to provide effective support systems to meet the needs of all the pupils involved.

Our strong Pastoral and Pupil Support Team are on-hand to provide well-being check ins and advice to all involved in the bullying incident(s). We also offer Targeted Support sessions from Pupil Support Staff, School Based Police Officer and School Counsellor.

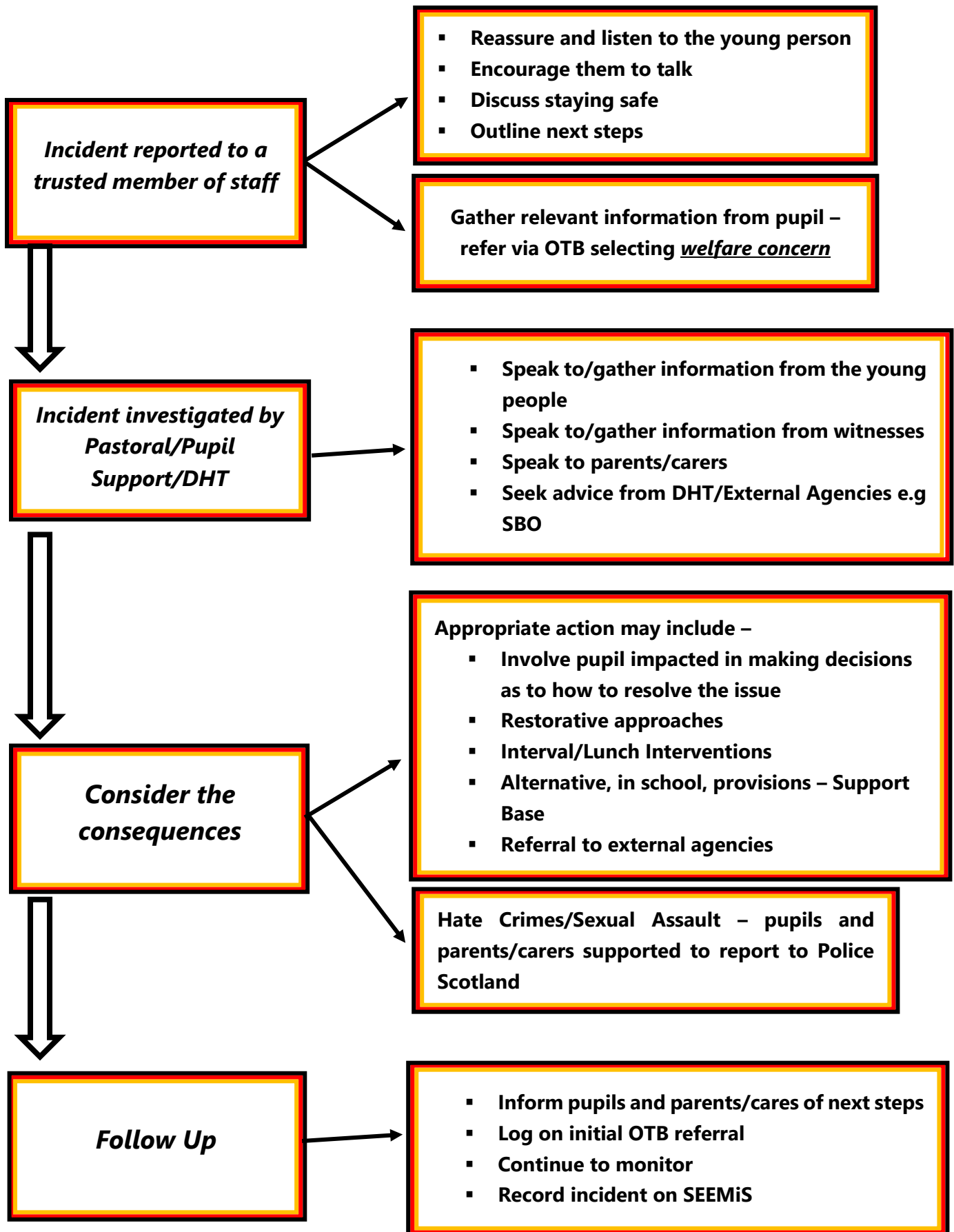
Children and young people who are exhibiting bullying behaviour will need help and support to:

- Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way
- Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings
- Understand the impact of their behaviour on other people and repair relationships





Where there has been an allegation of bullying, schools will:





References

Addressing Inclusion: Effectively Challenging Racism in Schools (2019)

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk>

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended
- Equality Act 2010
- Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Act 2009
- Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992

Addressing Inclusion: Effectively Challenging Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (2020)

<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/media/1299/addressing-inclusion-2020.pdf>

<http://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Addressing-Inclusion-Effectively-Challenging-Racism-in-Schools.pdf>

Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying, Scottish Government – published Nov 2017

Promoting Positive Relationships in Falkirk's Educational Establishments



We're here
to talk



Scan the QR code
to speak to your Pastoral or
Pupil Support Teacher

