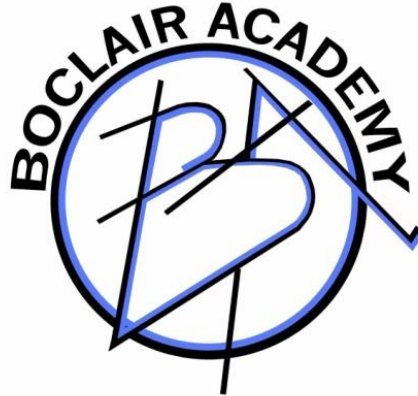


# Boclair Academy



## Anti-Bullying Policy

*'Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards'.*

**Scottish Government (2010) – A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People**

*The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that all children have the right to an education, and protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse. Bullying is no exception.*

*Bullying behaviour is a breach of Children's Rights across the four rights areas; survival, development, protection and participation. Children need to be protected from bullying behaviour so that they can survive, develop and participate in a fulfilling life and adults have an important role to play in helping to protect these rights.*

## Rationale

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to the pupils, staff, parents and carers of Boclair Academy on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (2015).

## Aims

The aims of the Boclair Academy Guidelines are to ensure:

- that all children and young people are provided with a safe, inclusive and supportive environment in which to learn;
- children and young people, parents and carers and staff have a robust understanding of what bullying behaviour is and the action which will be taken when it is witnessed or reported.
- a culture is promoted where bullying is recognised as being unacceptable;
- the prevention of bullying of children and young people through a range of approaches;
- effective support for children and young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying.

## Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this their sense of 'agency'.

It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be kept up over time, by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, hitting or hurting or the fear of these.

Bullying also occurs in the virtual world which children and young people access through the Internet, via social networking (eg FaceBook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Snapchat), computers and mobile phones. As communication can happen anywhere and at any time, often unsupervised, on-line bullying can be very pervasive and difficult to handle. However, in essence, the behaviour is the same and requires similar prevention methods. *Bullying – A Guide for Parents and Carers*, which includes guidance on on-line bullying, is available from 'respectme' – Scotland's Antibullying Service on their website - [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk).

Bullying behaviour may be related to prejudice-based attitudes and behaviours which may compound other differences or difficulties in a child or young person's life. These include:

- **homophobic bullying**
- **peer pressure**
- **homelessness**
- **disablist bullying**
- **religion and belief**
- **looked after children and young people**
- **socio-economic group**
- **asylum seekers and refugees**
- **sectarianism**
- **racist bullying**
- **body image**
- **sexism and gender**
- **young carers;**

To address the years of unfavourable treatment experienced by some groups, The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'. Protected characteristics are:

- **Age**
- **Gender**
- **Marriage and civil partners**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Disability**
- **Pregnancy and maternity**
- **Race**
- **Religion or belief**

## **LGBTQ+**

Nationally research has shown that a significant number of young people who identify as part of the LGBTQ+, have experienced prejudice and bullying. At Boclair we strive to prevent LGBTQ+ bullying of any form.

LGBTQ+ bullying can extend to any individual in our school community. Behaviour of this nature can include:

- Being singled-out, treated differently or subjected because an individual identifies as LGBTQ+ or are assumed to be LGBTQ+
- Misgendering
- Being subjected because family members identify as LGBTQ+
- Being "outed" without permission
- Spreading of rumours / hearsay with malicious intent

Staff, pupils, parents and carers are expected to challenge inappropriate use of language such as "that's gay" as by leaving it unchallenged it suggests that it is acceptable. We cannot condone homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language. No individual should be subjected to abusive language, and as a school we do not tolerate it.

At Boclair Academy we endeavour to exercise discretion and respect when responding to LGBTQ+ bullying incidents. We also have a duty to respect a young person's confidentiality. Like all bullying incidents, any LGBTQ+ bullying incidents are expected to be referred to the appropriate Principal Teacher of Pupil Support. The young people involved will be spoken to, the incident will be formally recorded and where appropriate, parents/carers will be contacted. In addition to this, we work in close partnership with our Community Police Officer and other agencies to help pupils understand how their language and behaviour can impact on others in negative way as well as being aware of actions and comments which can be deemed as a Hate Crime.

## Identifying bullying

Teachers have a duty to promote and develop positive and purposeful relationships with and between learners. Therefore they should communicate clear expectations of respectful interaction and role model this in their interactions across the school. If bullying behaviours are observed, they must be proactive in ensuring that the behaviour is addressed. When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

It is important to have clarity about these significant events and be able to recognise and acknowledge bullying behaviours when they happen.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening and intimidating by making prejudiced-based remarks;
- hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking;
- stealing and damaging belongings;
- ignoring, excluding, spreading rumours;
- sending abusive messages electronically, eg via text, emails or social networking sites;
- making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied;
- targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be.

This list is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours that could impact negatively on a child's wellbeing.

It is crucial to take into account the impact that bullying behaviour has on a child or young person. **The impact an incident has on a child or young person is more important than whether it is classified as bullying.** Actions can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration. The person who has experienced harm may have experienced just one event. **The impact determines the definition of bullying.** One incident is sufficient to alert adults to take supportive action.

## When is bullying something else?

It is equally important at this point to define what we say bullying ISN'T – namely the situations where friends have a 'fall-out'. In such instances, while there is still the need for support, it would not be considered within the terms of the anti-bullying policy unless, unresolved, it develops into something more serious.

There may also be times when what would appear to be bullying is, in fact, a **crime**.

Bullying is **not**:

- Hate crime
- Sexual harassment or assault
- Physical assault.

## Prevention of Bullying

RESPECT

HONESTY

FAIRNESS

AMBITION

Boclair Academy staff work to create a positive and supportive ethos by staff role modelling and commitment to sustain a culture that encourages respect, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes positive relationships. This relationships based approach makes it difficult for bullying behaviour to occur or be tolerated and is enhanced by a number of whole school approaches to prevention of bullying including:

- system which identifies vulnerable pupils and takes steps to remedy this;
- creative and motivational ways to engage pupils and raise awareness of bullying with theatre groups, speakers, film footage and music;
- involvement of the Pupil Council;
- anti-bullying campaigns, posters, assemblies;
- areas of special focus eg prevention of name calling;
- Best Buddies S1/S6 peer mentoring and anti-bullying initiative;
- enhanced transition programme for S1 pupils;
- support groups and clubs, including those for identified groups e.g LGBTQ+;
- PSE input on friendship and specific anti-bullying lessons;
- use of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme
- awareness raising days and activities e.g. autism awareness, Purple Friday;
- focussed assemblies – e.g Anti-bullying week, random acts of kindness;
- an understanding of the impact and legal consequences of on-line bullying, supported by campus police, for the whole school community through the curriculum, assemblies and events for parents and carers.

## Action

The member of staff to whom the incident is first reported, or who has witnessed the incident, should take the incident seriously. They must use their professional judgement in deciding upon appropriate action based on the impact of the bullying behaviour on the child or young person.

The child or young person who has **experienced bullying behaviour** will receive appropriate support and protection.

Examples of good practice include:

- the child or young person is taken to a comfortable place with no distractions;
- the child or young person is listened to;
- the member of staff should confirm that bullying is never acceptable; they deserve to feel safe;
- they should be gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken;
- they should be asked what they want to see happen next;
- the child or young person should be kept up to date with progress;
- details of the bullying behaviour and actions taken is recorded in the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module;
- the member of staff should inform parents of the incident and action taken, if it is judged to be appropriate.

When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the management team should, based on their professional judgement, endeavour to manage the resolution of the bullying incident within the school. Parents should be involved when their active support is needed to implement a resolution of the bullying incident.

Examples of good practice include:

- time should be taken to understand the reasons for the bullying behaviour;
- the individual or group should not be labelled as 'bullies', name the behaviour;
- staff should be prepared for a strong reaction from parents and carers, children and young people;
- staff should be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behaviour;
- addressing what is happening behind the behaviour, even when the bullying has stopped.

Consideration should be given to the sanctions and support given to the young person displaying bullying behaviour to ensure that interventions are intended to improve behaviour.

Such approaches might include:

- positive behaviour strategies with an appropriate member of staff, as agreed;
- restorative approaches;
- solution orientated approaches;
- involvement of educational psychologists and campus police.

However, 'where it is considered that in all circumstances to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline or the educational wellbeing of the pupils there' (*National Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities in Managing School Exclusions, 2011*), senior managers have the power to exclude as a last resort.

### **Communicating Awareness**

In order to tackle the issue of bullying it is essential that **everyone within the community** is aware that **bullying is never acceptable** and what action should be taken if they are subject to, or witness, what might be a bullying incident.

At Boclair Academy we will:

- commit to embed an anti-bullying ethos and deliver training on **anti-bullying courses** to both pupils and staff;
- in consultation with pupils, parents and staff, regularly **review**, update and publish the school **anti-bullying policy** on our website;
- **ensure** every room in the school permanently **displays** at least one **anti-bullying poster**;
- **display** relevant information on a dedicated **noticeboard**, in a prominent position, close to the main entrance to the school;
- **regularly communicate** with parents to keep them abreast of our work.

To help raise awareness we will:

- **provide training for senior pupils** which allows them to advise and help younger pupils **deal with bullying behaviours**;
- **run lunchtime activity clubs** to encourage social interaction and **provide access to literature and information** on bullying issues;

It is essential that everyone takes responsibility in creating a safe and supportive environment within Boclair Academy and we aim to achieve this by:

- **supporting** anti-bullying projects and nurturing a positive ethos of **respect for all**;
- **promoting** work on **personal safety and bullying** as part of the **PSE** curriculum;
- **encouraging** the development of environments in which **children and young people** can feel free of bullying and can **thrive**;
- **providing support** in individual circumstances.

### Reporting Bullying Behaviour

If you are being bullied or witness someone else being bullied it is **very important that you take action**: ignoring it can often mean it will get worse!

Steps you can take include

- **tell your guidance** teacher or any other member of staff,
- **tell a senior pupil (or your senior buddy)** who can then tell a teacher,
- tell your Parent or Carer

### What will we do when you tell us?

Bullying and harassment are wrong and we will always listen to any concerns or comments, but that doesn't mean the people who do it are 'bad' people. It doesn't excuse the bullying behaviour, but it does mean that it is possible to help them change the way they behave.

Steps we will take will include:

- **maintaining** confidence where appropriate;
- **discussing** incidents with **pupil(s) experiencing** the bullying behaviour;

- **discussing** incidents with **pupil(s) displaying** bullying behaviour;
- **If required**, discuss with relevant pupils and parents/carers;
- **taking** appropriate action.

We will encourage mediation which will involve:

- creating an ethos of **respect, inclusion, accountability** and **taking responsibility**;
- demonstrating **impartiality** and being **non-judgemental**;
- actively **listening** while encouraging **collaboration** and emotional **self-expression**
- facilitating **dialogue** and **problem-solving**;
- listening to and **expressing** emotion;
- empowering others to take **ownership** of problems.

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Anti-Bullying Guidelines will be reviewed during session 2022-2023.

Please email any comments: [office@boclair.e-dunbarton.sch.uk](mailto:office@boclair.e-dunbarton.sch.uk)