Swinton Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is a breach of Children’s Rights and children need to be protected from bullying behaviour so that they can survive, develop and participate in a fulfilling life. As adults we have an important role to play to help protect these rights, therefore, knowledge and understanding of Children’s Rights is essential to good practice.

Breached rights and consequences to those experiencing bullying behaviour can include:

The right to be safe and protected from harm (Article 19)

The right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups (Article 15)

The right to give your opinion and it to be taken seriously (Article 12)

The right to play and rest (Article 31)

* Feeling hurt, threatened, frightened, unsafe
* Not wanting to tell anyone for fear of not being believed or that doing so will make the bullying worse
* Changing behaviour to “fit in”
* School attendance and attainment
* Isolation from other peers and withdrawing from activities and places that they previously enjoyed
* Mental health and wellbeing concerns (stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, self-harm, alcohol and drug abuse, low self-worth)
* Bullying behaviour and/or violence towards others
* Suicidal thoughts and suicide

All members of our school community, including parents have a responsibility to safeguard the health and wellbeing of children that we work with and care for.

In Scotland, we have National, Regional and Organisational policy and guidance to inform anti-bullying practices to keep children safe and protected from harm and discrimination in our schools, communities and online. These have been shaped to reflect Children's Rights set out in the UNCRC. This policy reflects the principles from this guidance.

Principles are also reflected in our Relationships and Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

When bullying behaviour goes unchecked and unchallenged bullying can have a ripple effect of impacts by also affecting a child’s family, schools/organisations, communities and culture and society in general.

**Prevention**

We understand addressing bullying is both prevention and response. At Swinton we work hard to create a warm, welcoming and inclusive place for all our children. We work hard to help children and young people recognise, accept and celebrate differences and similarities. We are proud of our Silver Rights Respecting school Accreditation and use the principles of United Nations Convention on The Rights of The Child to guide us and our work with our children.

“Legislation, policy and practice are vital in assuring children’s rights. Yet those rights do not exist in isolation but in the wider context of children’s lives. They are experienced within caring relationships. They are realised by thoughtful, attentive caregivers (including teachers, foster carers, youth club workers, etc.) who notice changes in health, behaviour or in educational attainment, and who help and support a child to lead a fulfilling life.”

[***The Promise***](https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Promise_v7.pdf)

Particular approaches used in Swinton to support establishing an ethos where bullying is never acceptable, as well as fostering an environment where everyone is welcome and positive relationships and inclusion are priorities include:

* Silver Rights Respecting Award and working o our journey to Gold
* Strategies in class and school for children to share their concerns and feelings
* Quiet, safe spaces for children in class and school
* Strategies to support emotional wellbeing including Emotion Works, Emotional check ins
* Rights Respecting Pupil Group
* Whole School Vision & Values
* Use of pupil and staff questionnaires to evaluate strengths and areas for development (including GWMP)
* P6 Peer Mediators
* P6 Playground Pals
* Whole school and class charters identifying UNCRC articles and how they can be enjoyed by all
* Older pupils trained as referees to support safe behaviour during playtime basketball and football
* Supervision of pupils in the playground at morning break and lunch time
* Restorative Approaches used by all staff
* Identification by pupils and staff of possible problem areas in the school
* and playground
* Provision of playground toys and resources
* Positive relationships fostered within classrooms and around the school
* Pupils and parents/carers involved in the development of a school’s Anti-bullying policy and practice and Relationship and Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
* P7 buddying
* Visual reminders such as posters or wall displays
* Discussions through IDL, HWB, RME curriculum
* Weekly assemblies which have a UNCRC Rights focus each week
* Featuring anti-bullying at assembly

Swinton is committed to reducing the incidence and effects of bullying behaviour within its schools/early learning centres by:

* Establishing an ethos of Respect, Inclusion and Care
* Living by Nurturing Principles
* Taking seriously any report or allegation of bullying behaviour, investigating and taking appropriate action. This is supported by appropriate staff training
* Sharing with children and families how they can report bullying and the importance of this
* Providing support for children and young people who are experiencing bullying behaviour, including providing a Safe space, peer support, trusted adult check ins
* Help the person displaying bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour and supporting them as they change their behaviour through Restorative work, as appropriate
* Involving parents/carers, as appropriate
* Levels of bullying are monitored by SLT and procedures are in place for recording incidents on the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module
* Review of Bullying incidents to ensure best practice each term as part of Quality Assurance calendar

Spotting the signs and intervening early plays a key role in effectively responding and minimising any harm that a child may experience as a result of bullying. However, many children are reluctant to report bullying behaviour, which is why it is important to be able to spot the signs that bullying might be happening to a child so that you can give a supportive response as early as possible.

Definition

There have been many different definitions and theories about what constitutes bullying, but it is not helpful to define bullying purely in terms of behaviour.

***Bullying is both behaviour and impact; what someone does and the impact it has on the other person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. We call this 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 and it can happen face to face and online.***

***(Scottish Government, 2017)***

ONLINE BULLYING

Online bullying, or cyberbullying, is often the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example name-calling, spreading rumours and leaving people out, but it takes place online, For example

on social networking sites, in chatrooms, and via mobile technologies, gaming and instant messaging platforms. The impact of this can be as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour. This should be taken as seriously as any other form of bullying.

Some online behaviour is illegal. Children and young people need to be made aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content on forums, websites,

social networking platforms, etc.

**Prejudice-Based Bullying**

Children and young people may be bullied as a result of prejudice. This could be due to perceptions and prejudice about one of these protected characteristics or because of socio-economic prejudice. Any young person may not have one of the characteristics but may still be bullied because of perceptions about them, their friends or their family.

Swinton Primary is committed to challenging prejudice-based bullying and makes an explicit commitment to each of the protected characteristics.

If you are concerned that a child may be experiencing bullying and struggling, it's important not to wait for them to talk to you before trying to start a conversation about your concerns. If they are not ready to open up and talk, let them know that you will be there for them when they are ready, and encourage them to talk to another trusted adult if they feel there is someone else that they would rather talk to.

There are a number of potential signs to look out for if you are concerned a child is being bullied.

* Become withdrawn.
* have unexplained scratches and bruises.
* have trouble with school work or not want to go to school.
* change their route to school.
* not want to go out or play with their friends.
* change their use of online and/or mobile technology.
* complain of headaches, stomach aches and other pains.
* become easily upset, tearful, ill-tempered or display other out-of-character behaviour.

Bullying behaviours 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 electronically;

- behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves;

- being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be.

***But we should also be aware bullying behaviours can be subtle including:***

Fleeting threatening looks

Being critical of someone

Manipulating

Selectively greeting people

“Forgetting” to invite someone

Liking or not liking social media posts

Taking time to get to know children and young people is important part of being able to spot when there are changes in behaviour which requires investigation to support well being

**Addressing Bullying**

Bullying should be viewed within the context of promoting positive relationships – which should be at the heart of all work with children and young people.

At Swinton we use a supportive approach, seeking understanding and showing compassion are all aspects of a trauma informed approach that build a solid relationship with a child and provide the foundation for what makes a positive difference to children and young people’s lives. This includes both helping children and young people to deal with and recover from bullying as well as helping young people who are bullying others to change their behaviour by seeking to address the underlying causes of the bullying behaviour.

If a child has opened up to you and disclosed that they are being bullied you will want to ensure you give them the best quality response that you can as they are placing their trust in you. A good quality response will support coping and recovery.

We ask the following questions to ascertain how the child’s wellbeing has been affected and to restore a child’s sense of control:

*What’s been happening?*

*How is it making you feel?*

*What would you like to happen next?*

*What would you like me to do to help you?*

When we offer support to a child who has been bullied, our aims are:

To help restore their feeling of safety and being in control of themselves and the situation (their sense of agency) which bullying can take away.

To support them to use their strengths, talents, skills and resources to build their resilience and to be able to cope during this challenging situation, recover and prevent further harm and distress.

For the child or young person who is bullying, the goal is to:

Describe the bullying behaviour.

Help the child to understand the harmful impact of their behaviour on others.

Where the behaviour has been prejudiced in nature explain that prejudice is wrong and help them to understand the reasons why.

Learn and develop relationship skills such as accountability and empathy for others.

Help the child understand what's causing the bullying.

Help the child change their behaviour so that the bullying behaviour stops.

Develop skills to express emotions appropriately.

Support the child to repair relationships where appropriate.

***All behaviour is communication. This includes bullying behaviour.***

Helping a child to understand what is causing them to use bullying behaviour provides a vital starting place for children and young people. By helping them to reflect on the thoughts and feelings causing these behaviours, we can support them to find ways to manage difficult feelings and deal with these thoughts and feelings in ways that do not harm others.

Bullying situations will not be fully resolved at the first conversation. It can take time for bullying to stop and changing behaviour is a gradual process. Therefore, it is important that check-ins happen with all the children and young people involved after there is disclosure of bullying.

**Parents/Carers as Partners**

Parents and carers are the people who know and understand their children’s behaviour and their physical and mental wellbeing best. They have a key role to play in supporting their children when they experience bullying behaviour or display bullying behaviour. They are often able to offer advice to school staff on extra support their child might need or any creative solutions that may help resolve the situation.

It is important that as a school we listen to and respond to the concerns of parents/carers and ensure that there is clear communication between them when dealing with bullying incidents relating to their children.

***Parents and Carers are requested to:***

• Be aware of Glasgow City Council and respectme guidance for parents and carers responding to bullying

• Work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying cannot thrive;

• Inform education establishments of bullying behaviour at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter;

• Address their children’s behaviour when it affects others negatively and refrain from engaging directly in a negative way with any other children involved or their parents/carers/families;

• Manage their children’s use of electronic devices, mobile technologies and social media, including setting parental controls, ensuring privacy settings are in place and adhering to age guidelines;

• In the first instance, report any abuse to website providers, delete nasty or offensive messages and ensure their children unfriend or block persons potentially perpetrating abuse;

• Be aware of the type of incidents which may have to be reported to the police – retain any evidence which may include screenshots, messages, images etc

• Understand we seek to understand the experiences, and address the needs of all children and young people, who experience bullying behaviour as well as those who present bullying behaviour, within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support

• Be given the opportunity to express their views and help shape policy development in this area

• Be aware of the complaints process set out by the school and local authority and their rights with regard to these procedures

The views of the child / young person should always be taken into account in the decision making process of whether to inform parents/carers. It is important to sensitively weigh up the risks and benefits of informing parents/carers, as there may be occasions where the child or young person thinks that in doing so might make the matter worse or may place the child or young person in a harmful situation, e.g. if a young person has been the recipient of, for example, homophobic bullying, the young person may not choose to have the parents/carers informed due to fears about how this would be received, or provokes a response that the young person wishes to avoid. Another example might be one that leads to the parent/carer taking the situation into their own hands and escalating an already difficult situation by confronting the person who allegedly displayed the bullying behaviour or using social media.

It is most likely that parents/carers will be informed as they can play an essential role in prevention and addressing of bullying incidents. This may be face to face, by telephone or letter, however a record of all communication should be kept, ideally in pastoral notes. It is important to keep the young person informed about who their information has been shared with.

respectme offers a training session for parents and carers and schools can access this through their website

- [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

**SEEMIS- Recording, Reporting and Monitoring of Bullying and Discriminatory Incidents/Alleged Incidents**

This section should be read in conjunction with The Scottish Government’s Supplementary Guidance on Recording and Monitoring of Bullying Incidents in Schools.

HT and DHT record all incidents of bullying behaviour on the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module.

As part of Education Services quality assurance processes, data recorded on the module will regularly be analysed.

**Procedures for Reporting Bullying**

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, taking into account the circumstances and the information they have and this should be agreed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

In all cases it is crucial that the child or young person is listened to and supported.

It should be clear how the case will be investigated, monitored and reviewed. HT has the responsibility for ensuring that procedures relating to allegations of bullying are implemented and that the whole school reports available on SEEMIS are regularly monitored, once per term.

Within SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module information is recorded about both the person experiencing the behaviour and the person displaying the behaviour.

As well as recording that an alleged incident has been reported, detail about the incident should be recorded. Information about how the situation is to be monitored and reviewed should be

entered in the appropriate section and the views of the person experiencing, the person displaying, and, if appropriate the views of parent/carer should be recorded

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