

ACC Education Settings
Anti-Bullying
Policy
2023



Table of Contents

1. Policy Statement/Rationale.....	1
2. Definition of Bullying: What do we mean by Bullying?.....	3
3. Prevention and Positive Relationships.....	5
4. Roles and Responsibilities.....	9
5. Prejudiced based Bullying.....	12
6. Responding to Bullying Incidents.....	14
7. Recording, Reporting and Monitoring of Bullying incidents.....	16
8. Policy Implementation and Training.....	19
9. Policy monitoring and Review.....	19
10. Appendices.....	20

1 Policy Statement

Aberdeen City Council is obliged to meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010. Responsibilities extend to tackling unlawful discrimination and include promoting and encouraging equal opportunities.

Aberdeen City Council is under a legal duty to consider equalities as an employer, a policy maker, a service provider, a procurer of services and as a decision maker. The Equality Act 2010 protects us all.

Every person has one or more of the 9 defined protected characteristics.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage and civil partnership

In addition, prejudiced based bullying can also occur. Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance. This can include: an additional support need, being an asylum seeker or refugee, physical appearance, gender identity, being part of the gypsy/traveler's community, socio-economic status, being looked after and / or care experienced and being a young carer.

Bullying is considered to be a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Aberdeen City Council shares the view that: 'Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly. Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up.' Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017).

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for Education staff, partners and stakeholders in preventing and responding to incidents of bullying behaviour. The policy and guidance will ensure a clear and consistent approach to managing and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour across Aberdeen City education establishments.

It is recommended that all establishments have and publish an anti-bullying policy which is based on the guidance set out in this policy. This will ensure that schools have a pro-active and responsive approach to the prevention and management of bullying.

Establishments must adopt the following stance in their anti-bullying policy: 'Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly. Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up.' Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People 2017
Anti-bullying should be incorporated within the strategic remit of one member of each establishment's leadership team. However, in accordance with GIRFEC the wellbeing of pupils is the responsibility of all.

Parents/Carers, pupils and Aberdeen City Council Education staff have a responsibility to work collaboratively to ensure an environment free from bullying behaviour. Aberdeen City Council believes that everyone should be treated equally and with respect. 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) is the underlying principle for Aberdeen City Education Children's Services in ensuring the needs of all pupils are met. The Scottish Government defines the GIRFEC approach:

- is child-focused - it ensures the child or young person – and their family – is at the centre of decision-making and the support available to them.
- is based on an understanding of the wellbeing of a child in their current situation - it takes into consideration the wider influences on a child or young person and their developmental needs when thinking about their wellbeing, so that the right support can be offered.
- is based on tackling needs early - it aims to ensure needs are identified as early as possible to avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.
- requires joined-up working - it is about children, young people, parents, and the services they need working together in a coordinated way to meet the specific needs and improve their wellbeing.

In order to prevent and / or deal with instances of bullying all Aberdeen City schools/Early Learning centres adhere to the principles of GIRFEC.

2 Definition: What do we mean by bullying

All establishments must include the following definition of bullying in their antibullying policy which is endorsed by Aberdeen City Council:

‘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.’
 Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People 2017.

A further exemplification of bullying from the same document states that bullying behaviour: ‘can harm people physically 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.’
 Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People 2017

What is bullying behaviour?

‘Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.’ (Anti-bullying Alliance)

Bullying can harm people physically 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 behaviour includes:

Physical	pushing, poking, kicking, punching, hazing rituals, inappropriate touching
Verbal	name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, belittling, banter.
Emotional	isolating others, tormenting, threatening gestures, manipulation, coercion.
Prejudice-based	Prejudice-based means any comment or action intended to taunt pupils because of difference, real or perceived, in their appearance, behaviour, personal circumstances or any other matter. This can lead to behaviour and language that could manifest into racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith.
Online	abusive posts on social media, sharing photos without permission, offensive texts, sexting, impersonating another person online, patterning

This is not an exhaustive list and it is important to consider impact, rather than intent and persistence when defining bullying behaviour.

This policy applies to all instances of bullying behaviour which impact on a child or young person’s attendance or engagement to their learning or the learning environment.

Please note: where bullying behaviour is identified as criminal in nature, such as sexual harassment, assault or hate crime, the school will work in partnership with Police Scotland.

We must understand that 'bystanders' to any form of bullying behaviour are, to some degree, complicit - accepting of its effects and consequences within their community. Our young people are encouraged to be 'upstanders', reporting such behaviour and actively discouraging or condemning it when appropriate.

Where can bullying take place?

- Bullying behaviour can take place in a variety of spaces:
- Journey to and from school
- Local community
- School
- Extra-curricular activities
- Online (during and outside school day)

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 with other forms of bullying behaviour. This should be taken as seriously as any other form of bullying. Advances in technology are simply providing an alternative means of reaching people. Malicious messages can now be sent via mobile phone or the internet, making their reach greater, more immediate and much harder to remove or erase. Whilst advances in technology, including social media, provide many possibilities to enhance learning and teaching, teachers and other staff in schools/early learning centres should be alert to its possible misuse. 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.

Language and use of Labels

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. Reference should be made instead to "those experiencing bullying behaviour" and "those displaying bullying 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 not to develop predisposed notions about which child or young person is likely to fall into which category. If staff are unsure if behaviour is bullying, look at the effect it is having on the child or young person. It can be the case that one child says something unpleasant to another, but this is not always a case of bullying as it has no real impact on the child. Such behaviour should always be challenged, even if it is not bullying.

Conflict versus bullying behaviour

During their time in school, young people can often fall out with friends, make up, fall out again and repeat this process. Social groups can often shift and change. All young people are capable of being thoughtless, moody, rough or rude on occasion. Young people can be impulsive and unpredictable in their behaviour and this can result in tension and difficulties. Staff should always be careful to establish the facts in an open-minded manner before making any judgements about whether bullying behaviour has taken place or whether it is a matter of conflict between individuals or a group of individuals.

Conflict	Bullying Behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views. • Equal power between those involved. • End or change of behaviour when they realise it is hurting someone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal is to hurt, harm or humiliate. • Imbalance of power in the relationship which is then exploited by one person. • Continuation of the behaviour when they realise it is hurting someone.

It is important for children and young people to discuss how they feel and help them develop resilience to manage their relationships.

Signs that a young person may be experiencing bullying behaviour

Children and young people may display a wide range of signs that may indicate that they are being bullied or perceive that they are being bullied. Some of the signs that staff should look out for may be;

Psychological	increased levels of depression and anxiety, loss of confidence and self-esteem, mood changes, Suicidal thoughts, increased feeling of anger/aggressiveness, more emotionally unstable
Social	Social withdrawal/isolation, being ostracised or losing social relations, changing social media accounts
Physiological	increased stress levels, somatic complaints (headache or stomach ache), distress, unexplained injuries, loss of concentration, developing ticks or stammers, neglect of appearance, torn clothing, changes in eating patterns, missing personal items

Academic	Change in attendance at school, change in achievement levels, failing to achieve potential, school avoidance. Increased lateness to school. Afraid of the school journey.
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Ultimately, any form of bullying behaviour will affect a young person's ability to learn and build healthy relationships.

If you are a young person who is experiencing bullying behaviour, a young person who is demonstrating bullying behaviour or a member of staff or parent/carer who is supporting someone who has experienced bullying behaviour, then it is important that you know what is expected of you.

3 Prevention: Promoting Positive Relationships

Aberdeen City Council Education establishments must implement the following approaches in working to prevent bullying behaviour and raise awareness amongst pupils, staff and Parents/Carers.

Creating an inclusive ethos and culture is the most effective way of reducing and responding to incidents of bullying. All schools/early learning centres should promote the principles of GIRFEC and the responsibility of all to support children and young people in establishing and maintaining positive relationships. Developing positive and respectful relationships will make it difficult for bullying to take place. Anti-bullying work should be high profile and should include assemblies, class sessions and homework.

Programmes of education about bullying should be implemented from an early age and revisited at all stages of education. Establishments should ensure that they have visual displays relating to bullying and key aspects of anti-bullying policies. It may be appropriate to highlight work done during National Anti-Bullying week which takes place in November.

Schools/Early learning centres where positive relationships are based on respect and inclusion are more likely to develop effective resolutions and responses to bullying.

A school's Anti-Bullying policy should be complemented by other important documents such as positive relationships and behaviour policies which will support staff and learners to consider bullying as part of a continuum of behaviours.

Questions to help you think about the practice in your setting:

- How do we currently promote a culture of positive relationships in our setting?
- How do our values relate to positive relationships day to day?
- What visual prompts/reminders do we have in place to reinforce the message that our setting is based on respect for each other?
- What do children and young people in our setting tell us they need?

- Do they feel they need to create a culture where bullying is never acceptable and is not allowed to thrive?
- What evidence do we have on what our stakeholders say about our current ethos, culture and relationships within our setting? (Evidence, areas of strength and development, plans for improvement)
- How do schools know when they are getting it right?

Approaches to support establishing an ethos where bullying is never acceptable may include:

- Vision, Values and Aims statements which place an emphasis on mutual respect which have been agreed and discussed with all staff, learners and parents/carers.
- involvement of pupils and parents/ carers in the development of a school's anti-bullying policy and practice.
- Promoting active bystanders and promoting a culture where acting to stop the bullying of others is not seen as 'snitching'.
- rights respecting schools, restorative practices and solution-focused approaches.
- a Relationships Policy which makes clear that bullying is unacceptable and sets out everyone's responsibility in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour.
- visual prompts/reminders such as posters or on school website or school display screens to reinforce the message that our setting is based on respect for each other.
- discussions as part of PSE.
- activities such as role-play, artwork, drama and literature;
- featuring anti-bullying at school assemblies; making it clear how pupils can report bullying incidents and the potential outcomes.
- peer mediation.
- restorative approaches.
- Robust mobile technology policy and procedures.
- Parents/carers have a wealth of knowledge that schools should call on when reviewing their anti-bullying approaches.
- Parents and carers should also be made aware of their responsibilities and the setting's expectations if a bullying incident occurs involving their child and their responsibilities in relation to this.

Aberdeen City Council Education Services is committed to preventing and reducing the incidence and effects of bullying behaviour within its schools/early learning centres by:

- setting an ethos in schools/early learning centres which places an emphasis on respecting, valuing and caring for self and others;
- establishing a climate where all members of the school community, irrespective of age or status, promote and model positive behaviours and values;
- putting in place Anti-Bullying policies at Council and school/early learning centre levels;

- taking seriously any report or allegation of bullying behaviour, investigating and taking appropriate action where necessary;
- ensuring that staff, children and young people and parents/carers are fully conversant with the requirements of the school's/early learning centre's anti-bullying policy and that its terms and implications are discussed and reviewed on a regular basis;
- providing a variety of means to allow pupils to report bullying for themselves or their peers;
- providing support for children and young people who are experiencing bullying behaviour;
- helping the person displaying bullying behaviour to understand the impact of their behaviour and supporting them to change their behaviour in a more positive way;
- involving parents/carers, as appropriate, in supporting both children and young people who are bullied and those who are displaying bullying behaviour;
- ensuring the level of bullying in schools/ early learning centres is monitored by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and procedures are in place for recording incidents on the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module;
- putting in place quality assurance procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the policy and reviewing as appropriate.
- Supporting effective communication with all involved parties

The above will be supported by:

- ensuring that young people have someone they feel they can trust/have a good relationship with to report and discuss any concerns they may have – have a positive ethos/culture within our settings;
- providing opportunities for peer support initiatives which promote skills of active citizenship;
- providing appropriate staff training in recognising and dealing appropriately with acts of bullying;
- ensuring that children and young people who have experienced bullying behaviour receive appropriate support and protection from further abuse;
- including anti-bullying education within the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum for all young people as well as through cross curricular and whole school approaches;
- addressing anti-bullying through, for example, circle time, restorative approaches, and co-operative learning methodologies

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leaders in Education Establishments have responsibility to:

- Outline the key roles and responsibilities that each member of the school community in accordance with GIRFEC has; regarding preventing and responding to bullying behaviour within the policy
- Ensure that their staff are aware of and adhere to their responsibilities under the policy and inducting new staff in the Council's commitment to anti-bullying

- Ensure that any bullying instance raised is dealt with quickly and appropriately in a confidential, supportive manner in accordance with this policy
- Ensure that they seek advice from within the organisation where they are unsure about their responsibilities in relation to managing anti-bullying;
- Actively challenging any form of bullying behaviour;
- Create and maintain equality-friendly and inclusive environments where bullying is not tolerated.
- Ensure that Anti-bullying work is given high profile and should include assemblies, class sessions and homework.
- Establishments should work with Parents and Carers to address the holistic needs of the child consistent with the GIRFEC principles in response to an incident of bullying. Provide relevant anti-bullying updates annually to all staff.
- Ensure that Anti-bullying should be incorporated within the strategic remit of one member of each establishment's leadership team. However in accordance with GIRFEC the wellbeing of pupils is the responsibility of all.
- Provide all members of staff with access to a copy of the relevant school policy(ies).
- Undertake anti-bullying-related training and encourage their staff to participate in such training and monitor and manage their participation. This includes ensuring compliance with mandatory training requirements around equality, diversity and inclusion
- Ensure key staff are trained in the use of restorative approaches.
- Ensure that Anti-bullying policies are 'child friendly' and are shared with and accessible to pupils and Parents/Carers.
- Ensure that Anti-bullying policies take into consideration the needs of our more vulnerable groups including those who are Looked after
- Ensure the recording of bullying incidents accurately and monitor this information systematically. This will allow them to identify more readily the scope and scale of bullying incidents and make improvements in policy and practice to support learners wellbeing
- Establishments must record the number of bullying incidents centrally using The Bullying and Equalities (B&E) Module within SEEMIS Click and Go. Any recording of incidents must include specific detail e.g., in the instance of transphobic bullying, specifically detail the transphobic elements.

Staff

All Education staff must be aware of their key roles and responsibilities regarding preventing and responding to bullying behaviour and have a responsibility to:

- Challenge and report all bullying behaviour
- Ensure that they fully understand and follow the procedures for reporting, recording and monitoring bullying behaviour
- Always take reported incidents of bullying seriously and report them appropriately
- Ensure that there are suitable arrangements in place to encourage children and young people to report, with confidence, all incidents of alleged bullying
- Ensure that all incidents of bullying behaviour in school are investigated by relevant school staff and communicated to Parents / Carers as appropriate. Any support identified for pupils involved should be shared with Parents / Carers.

- Ensure vigilance regarding what may be behind the bullying behaviour as all behaviours are a form of communication.
- Ensure that you have access to a copy of this policy and familiarise yourself with its contents and any relevant anti-bullying updates
- Engage and access relevant training provided to build confidence and capacity to recognise and respond to bullying. This may include: restorative practice, resilience and mindfulness professional learning
- Educate pupils on the dangers of online and mobile technology communication.
- Work with relevant local authority and ensure school staff work in partnership with other agencies are appropriately trained.
- Work to educate pupils, staff and inform Parents/Carers about what to do when bullying behaviour is displayed, and how to support those involved
- Include within the curriculum work designed to inform children and young people on diversity and inclusion and the importance of respect and kindness.
- Raise the profile of anti-bullying work. Targeted lessons should be used to increase knowledge and understanding of anti-bullying policies and processes.
- Encourage pupils to teach and share key messages about bullying with other pupils and with Parents/Carers including the short and long-term impact of bullying

Learners have a responsibility to:

- report any instances of bullying they are aware of (including Cyber-bullying)
- Abide by their school's Positive Behaviour Policy
- Access the school's anti-bullying policy and understand processes for reporting bullying incidents
- Keep calm and not retaliate
- Not respond to abusive texts or messages
- Understand the impact of your actions on others.
- Fully participate in restorative conversations with all parties.
- Adhere to Aberdeen City ICT Policy and being aware of the dangers of online and mobile technology communication.

Parents and Carers have a responsibility to:

Schools should engage with parents/carers to work collaboratively in recognising, responding and preventing all forms of bullying. We recognise their vital role as influencers in children's and young people's lives. They have a key role to play in supporting their children when they experience bullying behaviour or display bullying behaviour.

- Report it. Contact the school as soon as possible should any incidents arise and ask to speak to your child's Pastoral teacher/member of the senior leadership team.
- Expect to be informed that the matter has been addressed. All incidents of bullying behaviour in school will be investigated by school staff and

communicated to Parents / Carers as appropriate but note you will not be advised of the outcomes of the investigation (although not of specific disciplinary action involving other young people).

- Work in partnership with the Principal Teacher Pupil Support to support your child.
- Support your child in learning about bullying behaviour.
- Monitor your child's online activity and refer to useful sources of information regarding internet safety and the dangers of online and mobile technology communication.
- Engage and participate with the school in information sessions relating to bullying and anti-bullying.
- Participate in reviewing anti-bullying policies and procedures.

It is important that schools/early learning centres listen to and respond to the concerns of parents/carers and ensure that there is clear and effective communication between them when dealing with bullying incidents relating to their children. Schools should update parents and keep them informed on what the school is doing and what are the next steps.

Parents and Carers can support anti-bullying:

- Be aware of RespectMe, Scotland's anti-bullying Service booklet - Bullying Behaviour: A Guide for Parents and Carers (available at <http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/>)
- Work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying cannot thrive
- Report it. It is important to inform education establishments of bullying behaviour at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Support their children in their learning about bullying behaviour. 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.
- Monitor and manage their children's on-line activity and use of electronic devices, mobile technologies and social media. This may include 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.
- 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 regarding these procedures.

It is most likely that parents/carers will be informed of any incidents in relation to a young person being bullied or displaying bullying behaviours. Parents/carers 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

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.

On those few occasions where it is felt by the Senior Leadership Team that respecting the confidentiality and best interests of the young person means a decision is taken not to inform parents /carers, then this must be formally recorded in the pupil's pastoral notes, with a clear rationale for not informing. This may form part of a wider risk assessment in managing the incident.

If appropriate, Schools/early learning centres should meet with parents. This will provide an opportunity for parents/carers to express their views and to establish an agreed way forward. It is very important that confidential/personal information about other pupils should not be shared with other parents/carers. RespectMe offers a training session for parents/carers and schools which can be accessed through their website - www.respectme.org.uk

5 Prejudice-Based-Bullying

Some groups of people are at particular risk of experiencing bullying behaviour motivated by prejudice against one or more of the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Different forms of prejudice-based? bullying are enacted differently, and some can be more prevalent than others and reflected in common usage or eg., homophobic or ableist language. Bullying based on or motivated by these characteristics is never acceptable.

Aberdeen City Council and individual settings are committed to challenging prejudice-based bullying and make an explicit commitment to each of the protected characteristics and expect all education establishments to include each of these in its policy (see Appendix 1).

The Equality Act 2010 act sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination related to any of the nine protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Race
4. Sex (Gender)

5. Pregnancy/Maternity
6. Religion/Belief
7. Sexual Orientation
8. Marriage/Civil Partnership
9. Gender Reassignment (transgender)

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

Aberdeen City Council is also aware of the potential vulnerability of children/young person in relation to the following:

- Asylum seeker or refugee status.
- Body image
- Care experienced young people
- Social or economic status
- Young carer responsibilities
- Imprisonment of parents/carers, siblings, or other family members.

6 Responding to Incidents of bullying

What to do if someone says they are being bullied?

All staff must be aware of their role in implementing 'Aberdeen City's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance.

Schools should ensure they have suitable arrangements in place to encourage children and young people to report, with confidence, all incidents of alleged bullying.

Bullying takes away a person's ability to feel in control and to take effective action: what we call our agency. Responses to bullying must focus on helping a person regain their feelings of being in control and to feel themselves again. Children and young people can feel powerless in bullying situations, so it is important that they are given the opportunity to inform the response. This allows us to find out what they want to happen, what they are worried about happening, and at what pace they would like the response to go.

Teachers and other school staff should never ignore any accusation of bullying behaviour and always take reports of bullying seriously. The initial response from the member of staff and their reaction is key. A child's experience may be directly affected by the response they get from the adult. It is crucial for school staff to listen and respond appropriately, sensitively and offer support whenever required. What matters most is that staff should listen to what the child or young person is saying and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling. It is essential that the young person feels that they have been heard. Effective listening helps us understand how young people are being affected and what we can do to help. We must listen carefully to what children and young people are saying **and** how they are saying it. You can learn a lot by paying attention to body language and facial expressions. 'Active' listening is about recognising these subtle cues and responding appropriately to them. Remain calm and give them your full attention. This shows a child or young person that you are taking them seriously.

This can be done by gently encouraging them to talk, find out what happened, who was involved, where and when - write it down if that helps. Staff might have to do some probing but should let the child or young person speak without interruption as far as possible. Keeping notes may be helpful but it is important that the child or young person knows why and how the notes will be used. This information would form the basis for further investigation and recording.

Staff should ensure that they respect the right to privacy for all children and young people involved in incidents of bullying. Given the potentially sensitive nature of the issue, conversations should be conducted confidentially and in private.

Respectme recommend that staff ask the following five questions:

1. What was the behaviour?
2. What impact did it have?
3. What does the child or young person want to happen?
4. What do I need to do about it?
5. What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

At this stage staff need to be very clear with the child or young person about what happens next. The child or young person needs to retain some feeling of control over the situation. It is vital that they are involved and updated on progress. Sometimes a particular incident can be resolved fairly quickly but in many cases it can take some time to work towards a resolution and it is important that the child experiencing the bullying behaviour feels supported and has some strategies to help. Bullying can have long-term impacts on children and young people. When the bullying behaviour stops, the impact may still be felt and the process of moving on from what may have been a traumatic event may need ongoing monitoring and support. Dealing with behaviour and impact allows staff to respond to offensive behaviour and language that may not have resulted in a person being bullied or

have little or no impact. The use of derogatory language and threats may be an attempt to bully and these should still be treated seriously.

Each school/early learning centre should have a clear set of procedures for reporting and investigating allegations of 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 or Pupil/Pastoral Support 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 with an agreed action implemented to resolve the situation. It is important that you have an agreement with the young person as to the 'next steps' of dealing with the incident.

A member of Senior Leadership Team in each school/early learning centre should have responsibility for ensuring that procedures relating to allegations of bullying are implemented and that the whole school reports available on SEEMIS are regularly monitored.

What about the Child who is presenting with bullying behaviour?

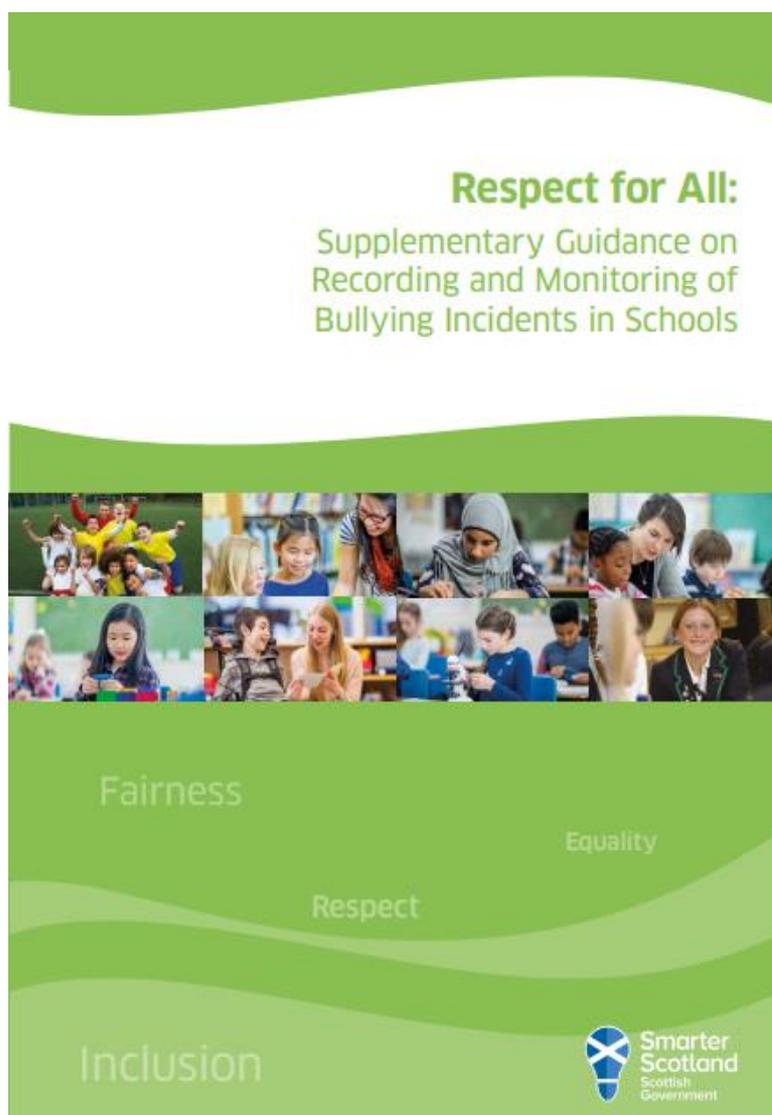
“Children and young people who are bullying will need help and support to help identify the feelings that cause them to act this way and develop strategies to cope with these feelings differently.” (respectme 2015)

All behaviour is communication, it may well be that the bullying behaviour of the child or young person may stem from an unmet need.

- Deal with the behaviour in the same way as you would with any type of distressed behaviour;
- Listen and take time to discover the reasons for the bullying behaviour;
- Do not label the individual or group as 'bullies', name the behaviour;
- Be prepared for a strong reaction from parents and carers and children and young people;
- Be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behavior;
- Address what's happening behind the behaviour, even when the bullying has stopped.
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There will be a wide range of actions or consequences that a school/early learning centre can take in response to bullying incidents. These actions should be proportionate and appropriate to the age and stage of the child and to the incident.

7 Recording Reporting and monitoring incidents of bullying



All staff must be aware of their role in the reporting and recording of bullying incidents. Establishments will be required to record the number of bullying incidents centrally using The Bullying and Equalities (B&E) Module within SEEMIS Click and Go. Any recording of incidents **must** include specific detail e.g., in the instance of transphobic bullying, specifically detail the transphobic elements. This will allow us to identify more readily the scope and scale of bullying incidents and make improvements in policy and practice to support learners' wellbeing.

Data recorded on the module will be collated and interrogated centrally as part of Education Services quality assurance processes. Robust and consistent analysis of bullying incidents will help schools and authorities to identify trends or themes in bullying and support planning for improvements to both prevention and intervention in tackling bullying.

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

The nature of the incident and the specific perceived reason for bullying (formerly Characteristics) must be completed in all cases. If an incident is covered by more than one of these select all that apply under these headings:

Nature of Incident

- Name calling, teased, put down or threatened
- Hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored • Spreading rumours
- Abusive Messages -online/phone/ gaming/social media
- Online/phone/gaming/social media
- Targeted because of who they are/ perceived to be;
- Other (Please Specify)

Perceived Reason(s) for bullying (formerly Characteristics)

- Actual or perceived Sexual orientation (e.g. homophobic, bi-phobic)
- Additional support needs
- Asylum seekers or refugee status
- Body Image and physical appearance
- Care Experience
- Disability
- Gender identity or Trans identity
- Gypsy/travellers
- Marriage/civil partnership of parents/ carers or other family members
- Mental health
- Not known
- Other: please specify
- Pregnancy and maternity

- Race and racism including culture
- Religion or belief
- Sectarianism
- Sexism and gender
- Socio-economic prejudice
- Young carer
- If 'Other' is selected from the list and added to the incident, an additional 'Other' text box will be displayed to enable details of the 'Other' incident to be recorded.

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.

Monitor and review

- Do they feel their concerns were listened to?
- Do they feel satisfied with the outcome?
- Does the parent/carer feel satisfied with the outcome?
- Has some form of Restorative Action taken place?(If appropriate).
- The Action Progressed section should then be completed outlining the actions taken and the conclusion of the investigation. Incident Conclusion
- Being addressed
- Resolved
- Not resolved
- Unfounded Information recorded in this part of the Module automatically creates an entry into the pastoral notes for each of the children or young people. This entry does not contain detail about the incident – its purpose is to indicate that an incident has been recorded in the bullying and equalities module.

Reporting of prejudice and discrimination incidents can be reported through Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC) and other outlets using this online form accessible on the Aberdeen City Council website:

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/home/report_it.asp

8 Policy implementation and training

Following approval of this policy it will be shared with and accessible to all Education and Children's Services staff, children and young people and parents and carers. As part of Workforce Development and Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL), Anti-bullying-related training will be made available to all staff. This may be delivered in partnership with Respectme and GREC. This includes

ensuring compliance with mandatory training requirements around equality, diversity and inclusion.

9 Policy monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored by the Quality Improvement team through the collation of data received from the outlined reporting mechanisms. Feedback will be gathered from staff using the policy and guidance.

This policy will initially be reviewed 12 months after implementation and subsequently every 3 years.

Appendix 1 – Prejudice- Based Bullying

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, we have a duty to assess all new policies and guidance to ensure it fulfils our duties under the Act. The Equality Act 2010 sets out a range of individual characteristics that are “Protected” from discrimination and unfair treatment including bullying. All children and young people have the right to feel safe regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation. All anti- bullying guidance should include all of the protected characteristics as well as other issues that may see children discriminated against such as body image or socio-economic status.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, together with a reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to continue and go undetected.

Body Image

Body image is hugely important to children and young people and bullying because of body image can have a significantly negative impact. For example, a child or young person who is noticeably over or underweight may find that they are particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour.

Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying is mainly directed towards young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) or young people who are questioning their sexuality. However, it can also be directed at young people who do not conform to strict gender ‘norms’. For example, a boy who doesn’t like football may stand out as being different. Ultimately, any young person can be homophobically bullied, and any young person can display homophobic attitudes which should be challenged.

Transgender

This is an umbrella term used to describe someone who does not identify with their assigned birth or does not conform to society's view of being male or female (Gender non-conforming or Gender Neutral). Children and young people who are experiencing dysphoria over their gender identity may be the target of transphobia. Transphobia at its most basic is the fear of a transgender person and the hatred, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice that this fear brings. It is usually a result of lack of knowledge and awareness. This can result in bullying behaviour towards an individual because they are not seen to be conforming to gender stereotyping and ‘norms’. If children and young people are experiencing dysphoria over their gender identity, they may be reluctant to challenge bullying behaviour that could attract further attention to them.

Care Experienced

Children and young people who are 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; they may have poor relationship skills stemming from attachment difficulties; inappropriate reactions to situations as a result of learned behaviours; a reluctance to make friends; low self-esteem, lack of role models and a heightened sense of privacy.

Race and Ethnicity

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups, including the Gypsy/Travelling community, often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture. The status of 'minority' in a school, community or organisation can often make a child or young person the focus for those involved in bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they '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, or having no faith, 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 fuel bullying.

Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate Sectarianism 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 as a target for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be.

Sexism and Gender

Gender inequality and stereotyping can leave children and young people, and in particular girls, who do not conform to these norms vulnerable to bullying. Bullying in the form of derogatory language, online comments 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 if they do not behave in such a way towards others. Personality traits that do not fit in to the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can make children and young people a target for their actual or perceived difference. These terms can be of an explicit gender-based nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards someone. This behaviour should not be confused with sexually aggressive behaviour, which is potentially a form of criminal harassment and should be treated as such. For this reason, in Scotland we recommend against using the term 'sexual bullying' as a descriptor in policies or in practice – it is an unclear and reductive term. Sexual assault and exploitation are not types of bullying, they are abuse.

Gender-based bullying – if unchallenged can lead to a deepening of attitudes and behaviour towards girls or those who do not conform to gender norms that can escalate to more abusive behaviours. This behaviour can take place face to face, in private and online or sometimes a combination of all of these. What happens or what is shared online will directly impact on a person and that should be our focus. In all probability online activity will relate directly to an experience or conversation they have had in person.

Successful anti-bullying work focuses on equalities and developing and modelling relationships based on respect and fairness – and this must include gender.

Disablist Bullying

People who bully 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. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision, and may result in a need for additional support to be provided.

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 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.

Social and Economic Prejudice

Bullying due to social and economic status can take place in any group no matter how little diversity exists in it. Small differences in perceived class/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, belongings, clothing, hygiene, etc can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group or class. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent in some locations.

Appendix 2 – Legislative Framework

These guidelines are set within several local and national strategies and legislation. The Scottish Government is committed to the promotion of children's rights and to the fulfilment of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In 'A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children (2010) the Scottish Government lays out the legislative framework for its policy on anti-bullying, which includes:

- Human Rights Act (1998)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)
- European Convention on Human Rights (1950)
- Crime and Disorder Act (1998)
- Antisocial Behaviour (Scotland) Act (2004)
- The Children Act (2004)

- Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021
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- Equality Act (2010)
- Respect For All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland' Children and Young People' (2015)
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/respect-nationalapproach-anti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/>
- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places GIRFEC in statute
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004)
- Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006
<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/getting-involved/scottish-schools-parentalinvolvement-act/>
- British Sign Language Act (2022)
- National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021
- The Promise Scotland Plan-21-24
- Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007

Appendix 3–Resources

RESPECT ME

Scotland's anti-bullying service was launched in March 2007. The service is fully funded by the Scottish Government and is managed by Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) in partnership with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth (LGBTY) Scotland. RespectMe develop resources both for training and awareness raising across Scotland free of charge.

- RespectMe Useful Links:
- About us: www.respectme.org.uk
- Respect ForAll: www.gov.scot/publications/respect-national-approachanti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/
- Information on bullying related to prejudice: Respect Me | Prejudice based bullying | Join the fight against bullyingrespectme
- Bullying...A Guide for Parents and Carers: www.respectme.org.uk/adults/bullying-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers/
- Policy Through To Practice – Getting It Right: <https://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Policy-through-toPractice-2017.pdf>
- For Children and Young People – Bullying...What Are My Options: <https://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/03611-Bullying...-What-can-I-do-revised-leaflet.pdf>
- Let's Talk About Bullying Monthly Webinars – www.respectme.org.uk/training/webinar-lets-talk-about-bullying/
- Anti-Bullying Learning Academy - Free e-learning modules: www.respectme.org.uk/training/anti-bullying-learning-academy/
- Respectme's reward programme – www.respectme.org.uk/anti-bullyingpractice/new-self-assessment-toolk

LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND

Youth Scotland provides direct services including groups, outreach, volunteering, advice and support, and actively campaigns to influence policy and improve services for LGBT young people and the wider LGBT community. They are committed to the principles of youth participation and user-involvement throughout the work of the organisation. LGBT Youth Scotland works with a wide range of partners from the voluntary and statutory sectors. Work with young people in schools includes interactive awareness raising sessions for young people. LGBT Youth Scotland has also trained young people in peer education to deliver LGBT awareness sessions in schools and other settings. LGBT Youth Scotland provides continuing professional development for teachers in Scottish schools and input to Initial Teacher Education on LGBT Youth issues. LGBT Youth Scotland has also developed resources and support including the toolkit for teachers: Dealing with homophobia and homophobic bullying in Scottish schools funded by the Scottish Government and developed in partnership with Learning and Teaching Scotland. The toolkit aims to increase awareness of the needs of LGBT young people in school, and to support school staff to develop skills and confidence in challenging prejudice and dealing with homophobic bullying, priorities which were identified in research with schools. www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

CHILDREN 1ST

This is the working name of the RSSPCC, CHILDREN 1st works with Scotland's vulnerable children and young people to help change lives for the better. Parent Line Scotland (0808 800 2222) is a service provided by CHILDREN 1st and is a free confidential helpline for anyone concerned about or caring for a child in Scotland to call about any issues affecting their children or family life. The helpline provides emotional and practical support to parents and carers whose children are being bullied, either at school or within the community.

www.children1st.org.uk

CHILDLINE

This service is delivered by CHILDREN 1st and hears from children and young people directly to make sure the voice of the people who call is fed into policy and influencing. There is also a Childline anti-bullying helpline in Scotland (0800 44 1111) specifically for children and young people who are experiencing bullying or who are displaying bullying behaviour. The training and outreach team at Childline Scotland works with schools raising awareness of Childline and the issues faced by children and young people.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/>

YOUTH SCOTLAND

Youth Scotland aims to enable young people throughout Scotland to maximise their full potential through the provision of quality educational and social opportunities. Youth Scotland is the largest non-uniformed youth organisation in Scotland and one of the key providers of information, training, advice and support to part-time and voluntary youth workers. The organisation has a membership of over 500 youth groups and organisations, and works in partnership with a network of Area Associations and regional staff to support youth workers to deliver safe and inspiring leisure opportunities to young people throughout Scotland. Youth Scotland contributes to antibullying in Scotland through engagement in development of national policies and through the provision of advice, information and training for those working with young people on a range of issues which may contribute to bullying behaviours, for example racism and sectarianism.

www.youthscotland.org.uk

EDUCATION SCOTLAND HEALTH AND WELLBEING WEB

Education Scotland is a non-departmental public body which plays a key role transforming education through national guidance, support and advice. The LTS website has information and resources relating to support, health and wellbeing and promoting positive relationships.

www.educationscotland.gov.uk

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/healthandwellbeing/index.asp

SAMH

SAMH is a national mental health charity dedicated to mental health and wellbeing for all. They provide support to people who experience mental health problems, homelessness, addictions and other forms of social exclusion through 84 direct services across Scotland and campaign to influence policy and legislation to ensure they provide a framework to enable individuals to improve their life experiences and opportunities. SAMH is committed to progressing antibullying work across Scotland as we understand the mental health impacts of bullying behaviour both for children and adults. Furthermore, we believe that the prevention of bullying behaviour and recovery from its impacts are fundamental to the realisation of individual human rights. SAMH is increasingly pursuing an antibullying agenda in all that it does driven by its management of respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service, in partnership with LGBT Youth Scotland. SAMH also Chair the management partnership for See Me, Scotland's anti-stigma campaign.

www.samh.ork.uk

ZERO TOLERANCE

Zero Tolerance aims to raise awareness about the nature and prevalence of all forms of male violence against women and children. Zero Tolerance targets campaigns and educational activities at the wider public, rather than just perpetrators or victims of abuse and makes the links between the different forms of violence against women and wider equality and human rights agendas. Zero Tolerance provides training materials for use in primary schools, secondary schools and informal youth settings through the Respect Education Initiative. Teachers, youth workers, health promotion specialists and young people were involved in the design of the packs which aim to empower young people with useful knowledge, skills and understanding and promote positive, non-violent relationships based on equality and respect.

www.zerotolerance.org.uk

ENQUIRE

Enquire is the Scottish advice centre for children with additional support needs, managed by Children in Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government. Enquire offers independent advice and information to parents, carers, practitioners, children and young people through a dedicated telephone helpline 0845 123 2303 or via the website.

www.enquire.org.uk

ENABLE SCOTLAND

Enable Scotland is a dynamic charity run by its members campaigning for a better life for children and adults with learning disabilities and supporting them and their families to live, work and take part in their communities. A report published in 2007 found that 93% of children and young people with learning disabilities are bullied. Enable Scotland in partnership with respectme have created a web site specifically to help adults tackle the bullying of children and young people with learning disabilities

(<http://www.enablemescotland.info>). Enable Scotland also provides training on disability awareness.
www.enable.org.uk

SCOTTISH TRAVELLER EDUCATION PROGRAMME (STEP)

STEP is based at the University of Edinburgh and funded by the Scottish Government. STEP provides information, advice and support to professionals engaged in enabling Scotland's Travelling families to access education and web links for children and young people to a range of different websites providing information and contacts with Travellers and people working with them to support their cultures and life-styles. STEP's remit includes supporting developments in inclusive educational approaches for Scotland's Travelling Communities and to address racism, harassment and bullying.
www.scottishtravellered.net

CHANGING FACES

Changing Faces is the charity which aims to support and represent children, young people and adults with disfigurements from a wide range of causes. Our aim is to help them achieve their full potential, receive excellent health, education and employment opportunities and be fully included in society. Our focus is on the psychological and social impact of disfigurement on the life of anyone who experiences it – and we are committed to enabling everyone, whether or not they have a disfigurement, to face it with confidence.
www.changingfaces.org.uk

SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

Show Racism the Red Card is an antiracist educational charity. We aim to combat racism through enabling role models, who are predominately but not exclusively footballers, to present an anti-racist message to young people and others. We achieve this through producing educational resources, developing activities to encourage people, including young people, to challenge racism, and through challenging racism in the game of football and other sports. Show racism the red card also provides training opportunities to those working for or with children and young people to raise awareness of issues of racism and the impacts on young people.
www.theredcardscotland.org

PUPIL INCLUSION NETWORK SCOTLAND (PINS)

The Pupil Inclusion Network Scotland brings together voluntary sector agencies and statutory sector colleagues who share a commitment to improving educational outcomes for all children. Over the past five years the Network has grown and through the PINS on-line resource and a series of seminars and workshops a body of knowledge has been built which captures what we need to do, in partnership, to make a difference. Membership of the Network is free and registration is via the PINS homepage. PINS is supported by the Scottish Government and managed

jointly by the Scottish Government (Learning Directorate) and voluntary sector agencies.

www.pinscotland.org

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMISSIONER SCOTLAND (CYPCS)

The job of Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland is to promote and safeguard the rights of children and young people in Scotland. In carrying out this job the Commissioner must in particular: promote awareness and understanding of the rights of children and young people; review law, policy and practice to examine their effectiveness in respecting the rights of children and young people; promote best practice by service providers; and promote and commission research on matters relating to the rights of children and young people. The Commissioner must encourage the involvement of children and young people in the work of the Commissioner, and in particular consult with them on the work that he should be doing to improve the rights of children and young people. The Commissioner has a power of formal investigation where it seems that the rights of groups of children and young people might have been breached, but cannot investigate matters that apply to only one child.

www.cypcs.org.uk

Appendix 4: Related Links

- Respect for All Supplementary Guidance on Recording and Monitoring of Bullying incidents in schools
- Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
- Included Engaged Involved Part 2: Included, engaged and involved part 2: preventing and managing school exclusions - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
- Supporting Transgender Young People in Scottish Schools: Guidance for Scottish Schools 5. Anti-bullying training opportunities can be viewed at: respectme
- Book respectme trainingrespectme

Appendix 5: Reporting, Recording and Monitoring of Bullying Incidents Flow Chart

Reporting, Recording and Monitoring of Bullying Incidents

Schools/Establishments should promote consistency of response to instances of bullying behaviour using the following steps:



All incidents of bullying MUST be recorded using the Bullying and Equalities Module within SEEMIS. Any recording of incidents must include specific detail of the incident e.g. the nature of bullying

Investigate the incident. Speak to the individuals involved and establish the facts. What was the behaviour and its impact?

Listen to the views of the child/Young person. What do they want to happen? Keep the child/Young person informed of the next steps

Parents/Carers should be informed and provided with updates as appropriate

Outcome: Where an incident is found to be bullying, schools should ensure that the appropriate supports/interventions are in place for individuals/groups to address any underlying prejudice

Monitor the situation assessing the need for further interventions

Review actions and respond accordingly. Once concluded the incident(s) should be resolve and closed off on SEEMIS

