



Kirkcudbright Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2020

Respect Me Anti-Bullying Policy

Kirkcudbright Academy

Aims:

The aim of Kirkcudbright Academy's Anti-Bullying policy are:

- To help ensure that all members of the school community are respected and feel safe and secure when coming to school.
- To promote positive relationships to ensure that pupils are able to achieve as well as possible in our school.
- To promote respect for each other and for our differences.
- To ensure that there are clear procedures to follow to help to prevent bullying behaviour and to deal with it when it occurs.
- To ensure that we are working together in line with our school values of Honesty, Equality, Aspiration, Respect and Trust

Rights and Legislation:

The United National Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UNCRC sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It states that "education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full". Children's voices should be heard and their wishes respected without discrimination of any kind. These rights of children are now embedded in Scottish legislation.

The Equality Act 2010

This Act places duty on schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Act put legislation in place to prevent direct or indirect discrimination against persons as a result of their:

- Disability
- Sex (Gender)
- Gender reassignment (Transgender)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

GIRFEC

Kirkcudbright Academy is fully committed to the principles of GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child. This place’s every young person’s wellbeing at the centre. The GIRFEC principles and values are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. More information can be found at <http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/girfec>

Stakeholders’ Views

Dumfries and Galloway Council emphasises

“The importance of developing respectful relationships within school communities, emphasising the importance of creating environments where everyone feels safe and respected in order to support attainment and achievement.”

Our staff say

“Happy, engaged pupils are less likely to bully. [We should] boost self-esteem in bullies and victims.”

“[We should] encourage acceptance of individuality and difference. Model appropriate ways to talk to/treat individuals and show how we expect to be spoken to/treated by others.”

Our parents/carers say

“[the policy should include] definite action to be taken against the bully and to support the victim. Help and support of the bully to find out why the bullying is taking place and to help the bully to resolve any personal issue they may have going on.”

“Victims could have regular contact with named teacher. Bullies need to be taught what they are doing is harmful and punishment needs to be considered... Children need to feel they can approach teachers as not all can tell their parents.”

Our pupils say

“[Bullying] can’t be totally prevented but it may help if people know the consequences and what’s it’s like to be bullied and are aware of better ways to sort out or deal with dislikes or problems.”

“[our school should] try to encourage pupils to take positions of responsibility in the school. Use S6 or older pupils to help enforce rules and set an example. Keep offering lots of clubs for a sense of community and safety.”

Definitions of Bullying

Children will tease, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and have disagreements. This is a normal part of growing up and should be distinguished from bullying. However, in an environment where this behaviour is left unchecked, it can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feel afraid, uncomfortable and unsafe in their environment.

Respect for All, Scottish Government 2017, defines bullying as:

“Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of ‘agency’. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.”

Bullying is a complex behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or humiliated. It should be defined by the *impact* it is having on the person or people affected. It is therefore not always easy to narrow down behaviours into a definitive statement. However, Respect Me gives the following examples of bullying behaviours:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face or online
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face to face and/or online)
- Being sent abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone.
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives.
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face or online)

Something need only happen once for a child or young person to feel worried or scared to go to school, however, we might not call a ‘one off’ incident bullying. It is important to take into account the impact on the child or young person.

Impact of Bullying

Many young people who experience bullying do not tell anyone. However, they may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened
- Doesn’t want to go on the school/public bus
- Asks to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence

- Feels ill in the mornings
- Withdraws from clubs or activities
- School work starts to suffer
- Stops eating
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has possessions damaged or 'lost'
- Is afraid to use the internet or phone
- Becomes aggressive, unreasonable or disruptive
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is unable to sleep
- Attempts or threatens suicide

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated. Quiet, calm discussion and good listening is vital for understanding what is really happening. We would ask that if parents/carers are concerned that their child is being bullied then they contact their pupil support teacher so that we can work together to resolve the situation.

Preventing Bullying at Kirkcudbright Academy

All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent bullying behaviour by promoting positive relationships and modelling respect for others.

Staff say that they can do this by:

"Treating everyone fairly, acting on unkind behaviour and creating an inclusive environment."

"Having good manners towards pupils and high expectations of acceptable behaviour towards me and other pupils."

Pupils say that they can:

"Treat others with respect and the way you want to be treated."

"Set a good example by treating everyone with respect no matter who they are. Also, if someone feels sad or lonely go and talk with them to make them happy again."

Parents/carers say that they can:

"Talk to the kids regularly about bullying and not engaging in bullying behaviour. Engage with the school if there is a problem."

"Encourage children to talk about experiences and make them aware of support available."

"Talk to their kids and work closely with the school and other parents."

Building positive relationships is the key focus of Junior UPS, and pupils can approach their UPS tutor with any concerns that they have.

Building positive relationships is a core theme throughout our PSHE programme, as is awareness of diversity. There is specific anti-bullying input for all year groups as follows:

- S1 - Cyberbullying(Police input); Being Different; Internet Safety (Police input)
- S2- Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme; Disabilities; Peer Pressure; It's Not Okay (NSPCC talk and materials)
- S3 -It's Not Okay (NSPCC materials); Do the Right Thing (Police Event); Consent/Sexual Violence (Rape Crisis input)
- S4 - Bullying/Homophobic Bullying
- S5 - MVP Programme; Rape Crisis input

Other aspects of the school curriculum also promote the school values of Honesty, Equality, Aspiration, Respect and Tolerance, and all staff in the school are aware of their role and responsibility in promoting a positive and inclusive ethos for all.

Kirkcudbright Academy also endeavours to foster an ethos of inclusion, ensure support is available for pupils and prevent bullying by:

- Ensuring that all new S1 pupils have an S6 buddy, whose role it is to check in regularly with their buddy and ensure S1s have someone they can talk to.
- Ensuring that all pupils know that there are people in school who they can talk to; all pupils have an allocated UPS Tutor, Pupil Support Teacher and Head of House, but can approach any trusted member of staff.
- Ensuring there are safe spaces available for pupils at break and lunchtime, including clubs, the school library and certain classrooms which are open to pupils.
- Promoting our school aims of Honesty, Equality, Aspiration, Respect and Tolerance through the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and assemblies.
- Working with partner agencies to provide specialised support and advice.

We will also work with our cluster primaries to promote consistency in our methods of preventing and actions when dealing with bullying incidents.

Responding to Incidents of Bullying

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to act upon bullying behaviour that takes place. If bullying behaviour takes place in the classroom, for example name calling, the member of staff present should deal with this immediately, making it clear that this behaviour is unacceptable and, if appropriate, removing the person displaying bullying behaviour from the room. This should then be passed onto the Pupil Support Team for further investigation and action.

In line with national guidance, the focus when dealing with bullying behaviour at Kirkcudbright Academy must always be on ensuring that the bullying stops, rather than on punishment, which can be counter-productive. Steps need to be in place to support both the person experiencing and the person displaying bullying behaviour. Young people who bully others often do so because of complex reasons and will need support in addressing any underlying issues and changing their

behaviours. It is also important not to label young people a 'bullies' or 'victims', and to place the emphasis on the behaviour and its impact, focusing on resolving the issues and moving forward positively.

Steps we will take once bullying behaviour has been reported/identified

Where possible, it should be the same member of staff who carries out the entire investigation – this is likely to be either a member of the Pupil Support Team or the Senior Management Team.

Supporting the Person Experiencing Bullying Behaviour

- This person can expect that the matter will be taken seriously and dealt with as promptly as possible in line with school and authority policy.
- The member of staff investigating the incident will talk with the pupil about what they have been experiencing and what could be done to help them feel safe/resolve this situation.
- Peers will be identified to support and help the young person – the member of staff should, with the young person's permission, share the information with these peers and ask for their support.
- A member of staff will also be identified who the young person can talk to if needed; this may be the person who is carrying out the investigation or may be another member of staff who the young person trusts and feels confident in talking to.
- Possible next steps in terms of dealing with the person displaying bullying behaviour will be discussed; it is important that the young person experiencing behaviour is fully informed of any next steps and their intended impact. Action will not be taken until the young person is ready for this, unless there is a risk to their personal safety.
- Sharing information with parents/carers will be discussed with the young people and done with their agreement. If it is felt to be necessary without their agreement then this will be explained to them. Staff dealing with instances of bullying behaviour need to be aware of confidentiality to avoid sharing information with parents/carers that the young people are not ready to share, for example sexuality. This is in line with Local Authority and National Guidance.
- Other supports, such as our Youth Workers, the School Nurse Service or CAMHS may be considered if thought appropriate.
- A restorative meeting between both parties may be arranged.

Dealing with the Person Displaying Bullying Behaviour

- The member of staff investigating the incident will talk with the pupil about what they have been reported and the impact of their behaviour. They will be given an opportunity to discuss why they are behaving in this way, what would help them to stop and the possible consequences if they do not.
- The focus will be on ensuring the behaviour stops rather than punishment at this stage.
- If appropriate the young people will be brought together for a restorative meeting with an adult mediator to try to resolve the problem.

- Parents may be informed at this stage if it is felt to be appropriate.
- Other supports, such as our Youth Workers, the School Nurse Service or CAMHS may be considered if thought appropriate.
- If the behaviour continues, parents will be informed at this stage and the following consequences may be used:
 - Detention
 - Removal of privileges such as participation in clubs/school trips/events
 - Moving classes
 - Internal exclusion
 - Fixed term exclusion from school (this can only be used as a very last resort)
- Police may be involved if there are implications in terms of the law.

Additional steps that may be taken in dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour

- Informing staff so that they can take preventative measures in classes, such as changing seating plans
- Restorative meetings/a programme of work may take place with the pupils involved or their wider friendship group – this is often led by our link Youth Worker.
- The pupils' Pupil Support Teacher or trusted member of staff will continue to check in with them to monitor the situation.
- The incident will be recorded on the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module (see below)

Recording of Bullying Behaviour

Respect for All: 'National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People' (2017) highlights the need to accurately record and monitor bullying incidents in school:

"...Accurately recording incidents of bullying allows organisations to ensure that appropriate response and follow up has been issued. It helps the organisation to monitor the effectiveness of its policy and practice and can also help identify a need for training..."

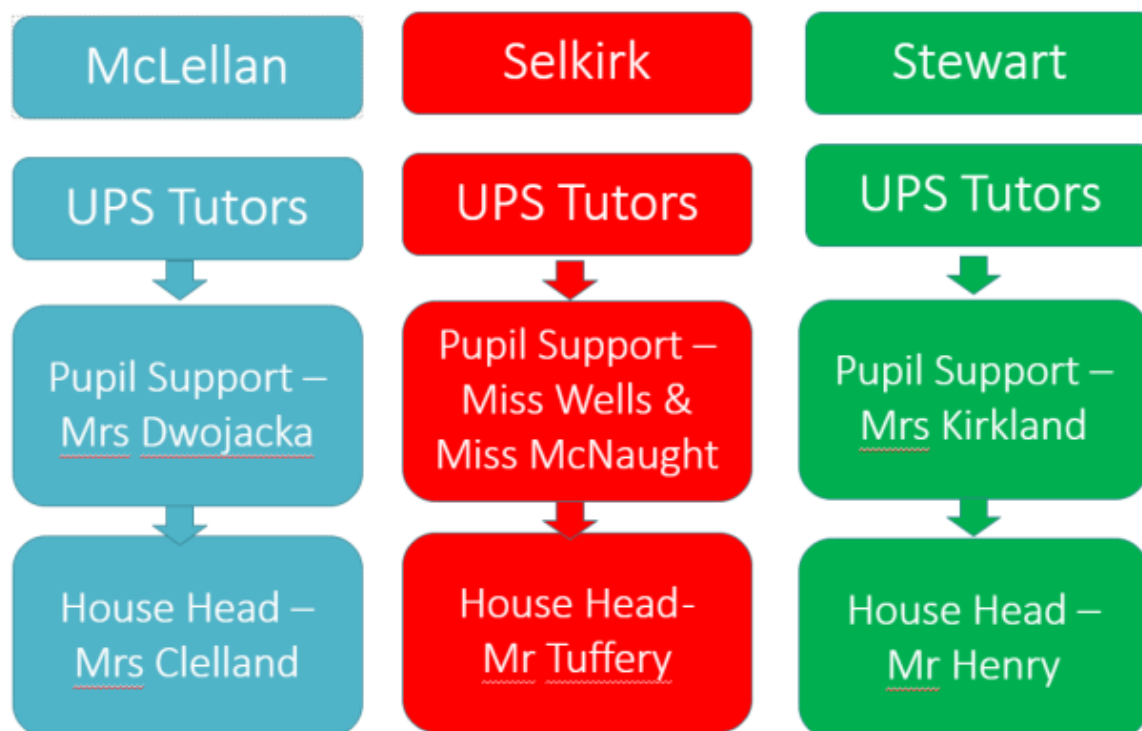
All bullying incidents in school will be recorded using the Bullying and Equalities Module in SEEMIS. This enables schools to enter, monitor and record details of any alleged incidents of discrimination, and to identify any patterns of bullying behaviour which need to be addressed at a whole-school level.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Who to contact if you have concerns about bullying – the House Team approach to supporting pupils.

If you have concerns about bullying you can email the school office at gw08officekirkcudbright@ea.dumgal.sch.uk, who will forward your email to the relevant person.



Appendix 2

Useful links

Websites:

Respect Me, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service - <https://respectme.org.uk/>

UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

Think U Know, resources for parents and young people - <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Kidscape, helpful links and advice for parents and young people - <https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

Digzien, information and resources aimed at developing awareness and understanding of responsible digital citizenship - <https://www.digizen.org/>

