



CULTS PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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).

'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

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. Aberdeen City Council Anti-bullying Policy 2023

'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. Respect for All

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. We know that children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of growing up and most children and young people have the ability to bounce back from this type of behaviour. Early intervention and prevention are key elements of an approach focused on ensuring we get it right for all of our children and young people.

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.

Ultimately, any form of bullying behaviour will affect a young person's ability to learn and build healthy relationships.

Responding to bullying

When responding to incidents or accusations of bullying the approach should be to ask:

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What does the child or young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do about it?
- What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

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

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





We need to help children and young people who demonstrate bullying behaviour by providing clear expectations about behaviour as well as providing a range of ways to respond. This can include taking steps to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends. We need to challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour. Consideration should be given to any factors that may impact upon a child or young.

All incidents of a bullying nature will be logged with support afforded to both parties. A bullying incident is defined by the perception of the victim, not the potential perpetrator(s) or practitioner's perception. In situations where a victim of bullying does not want to report it due to fear of potential consequence, the responsibility lies with practitioners to do so, whilst also reducing anxieties of the victim. Any emerging trends will inform a review of the school Anti-Bullying Policy and help inform approaches to safeguarding. Preventative and reactive response to all incidents of bullying will be in full alignment with Cults School's Anti-bullying Policy, Respect for All and Aberdeen City Council's Anti Bullying Policy.

Parents/Carers, children and staff should feel confident that bullying in any form will not be tolerated at Cults Primary School and that, should incidents occur in school, immediate, appropriate action will be taken.

Related school policies:

- Acceptable Use of ICT
- Mobile Devices
- Social Media
- Google Classroom
- Relationships
- Child Protection and Safeguarding

School aim:

To create confident, challenged and empowered learners.

The overall aim is to prevent bullying altogether by:

1. Promoting a rights respecting, non-bullying culture which:
 - values each individual.
 - fosters feelings of self esteem and self worth and respect for others and their rights.
 - helps learners to take responsibility for their own actions.
2. Maintaining the high standards of building and maintaining positive relationships, as stated in the school's relationships policy.
3. Raising awareness of all aspects of bullying throughout the school in a variety of ways.
4. Creating a supportive environment in which the child receiving and the child displaying bullying behaviour, and witnesses feel it is safe to speak out and know that the individual will be listened to.
5. Encouraging children to have respect for individuals and individuality and to recognise that no individual has the right to hurt or mistreat another person.

Aims into practice

We recognise that we have a responsibility to create a safe, secure and happy environment for all our children and staff and to ensure that this is safeguarded at all times by a clearly defined, well implemented anti-bullying policy to which all staff, learners and parents/carers are committed.

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.





School Staff will:

- Watch out for early signs of distress in pupils:
 - deterioration in work and concentration.
 - unexplained or improbable excuses for injuries.
 - erratic attendance and late arrivals.
 - a desire to remain with adults.
 - unusual passivity or aggression towards others.
 - fear of walking home.
 - low self-esteem and poor relationships.
 - any uncharacteristic behaviour e.g. frequent complaints of minor illness.
- Be positive role models by showing respect for each other, and for children as individuals, and always striving to be fair.
- Raise awareness of bullying issues through circle time, assemblies, media, stories, role-play etc.
- Listen carefully to victims, bullies and witnesses to try to establish exactly what has happened.
- Respond calmly and sympathetically.
- Recognise that the child displaying bullying behaviour as well as the child receiving may need support.
- Share concerns with relevant colleagues.
- Record all incidents causing concern.

SLT will:

- Try to establish what has been happening.
- Make it clear to the child displaying bullying behaviour why their behaviour is unacceptable and that it must not be repeated.
- Inform the parents/carers of both the child receiving and the child displaying bullying behaviour and agree an appropriate action.
- Reassure the child receiving that they will receive support should there be a recurrence.
- Record the date and nature of the incident and the action taken.
- Organise intervention as appropriate e.g. to foster positive relationships, to build self-esteem and teach coping strategies, involving outside agencies e.g. educational psychologist if necessary.

Parents will...

- Be aware of anti-bullying policies and practice in any school/ clubs/ groups attended by their child or young person
- Work collaboratively to help ensure bullying cannot thrive
- Share concerns about their child as early as possible with appropriate teacher/ practitioner/ coach
- Engage through school Parent Forum/Parent Council or other appropriate forums to contribute to and learn about anti-bullying practice
- Treat people with respect
- Promote positive respectful relationships
- Listen and take children and young people seriously
- Watch out for early signs of distress in pupils:
 - Not wanting to go to school.
 - Frightened about walking to/from school.
 - Losing pocket money or belongings.
 - Refusing to tell you what is wrong.
 - Changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive.
 - (There may of course be other reasons behind such incidents.)





Children can hide the fact that they are being bullied. Sometimes it is because they don't want to worry their parents/carers or are worried about their parents'/carers' reaction. They can also be frightened of what the bullies may do if they tell.

If you think your child is being bullied, you may feel a range of emotions such as anger, anxiety or helplessness. You can help by:

- Talking calmly to your child and encouraging them to share their problems with you.
- Giving your child space to calm down and self-regulate before asking them to talk about what happened.
- Letting your child talk about their feelings, when they are calm and able to think clearly.
- Reassuring them that they do not deserve to be bullied and that you will help them.
- Letting the school know about the situation as soon as possible so that you, your child and the school can work together to resolve the problem.

If you believe your child is the bully, then you too may feel angry or helpless about the situation. You can help by:

- Talking to your child to find out what they think is happening.
- Trying to show them how you feel about it and giving the clear message that bullying is wrong.
- Referring in discussion to the school values; ambition, equity, fairness, honesty and respect.
- Contacting the school so both you and the school can help to get the message across of the extent of the upset caused to all concerned.

Learners will...

NO ONE DESERVES TO BE BULLIED!

Bullying may make you feel unhappy, lonely or even that there is something wrong with you. It can happen to anyone and often there is no reason for it.

If you are being bullied you can:

- Talk to someone you trust – your parents/carers, a friend or a teacher
- Try to be brave and ignore the bully. This can be difficult.
- Tell the bully to stop.
- Try not to let the bully see you are upset.
- Stay with groups of people; try not to be on your own.

If you see someone being bullied you should:

- Get help from a trusted adult! Don't just stand and watch.
- If you feel confident and empowered, let people know that you and your friends disapprove of that kind of behaviour.
- Watch out for children who are being bullied and try to be a friend to them.

Please don't be scared to tell someone if you are being bullied – there will always be someone to help you.

Posters are displayed throughout the school to remind children what to do.

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the Relationships Policy and regularly reviewed by staff and representatives from the learners and parent/carers.





Further support can be found at:

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/parentline-scotland/guidance-advice/bullying/>

<https://respectme.org.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/respect-national-approach-anti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/>

