**Linwood High School

Anti-Bullying Policy**

 **August 2023**

 

**Our Vision**

Linwood High School is committed to ensuring all young people are included, respected and supported to achieve their potential in a safe, nurturing learning environment. We firmly believe that strong trusting relationships and high expectations are at the heart of inspiring our young people to achieve and attain both within and beyond school. As a school, we recognise the importance of every young person’s wellbeing across the whole school community and work with families and partners to ensure successful learning and achievement takes place.

At the core of what we do is the value we place on respect, care and building positive relationships which develops successful, resilient, thriving young people.

**Our Aim**

* To prevent, reduce and respond effectively to bullying behaviour of young people.
* To support young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying behaviour.
* To provide a secure, safe and positive environment where young people feel able to discuss their problems.
* To build the capacity, resilience and skills in young people, parents and carers to prevent and deal with bullying behaviour.
* To ensure the provision of information, training and support to those working with young people.
* To ensure the approaches to anti-bullying behaviour are consistent with Renfrewshire Council policy.

**What is Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying is defined by the Scottish Government as “behaviour which leaves people feeling helpless, frightened, anxious, depressed or humiliated.” (A National Approach to Anti Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People, 2010).

*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 me 2015).

Bullying may be based on prejudice because of differences, or perceived difference of the characteristics of a child or young person or group, in which they are perceived to belong to. Prejudice is defined as a negative judgement of someone due to their difference or perceived difference. Bullying related to a protected characteristic need not be directed at someone who has a particular characteristic but can also be based on a perception that they do, or that they have an association with, people who do.

These may include a child or young person being looked after; or a young carer; or asylum seeker or because of the socio-economic circumstances, or the protected characteristics covered by the school specific provisions of the Equalities Act, 2010:

* Disability;
* Gender reassignment;
* Pregnancy and maternity;
* Race;
* Religion and belief;
* Sex; and
* Sexual orientation.

Prejudice based bullying which relates to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act such as race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity and disability may also be classified as a ‘hate crime’.

Bullying can be displayed, but not limited to, behaviours such as:

* physical abuse such as hitting, tripping or kicking;
* emotional and psychological abuse such as name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening;
* targeting someone because of who they are perceived to be or because of who they are;
* isolation and exclusion of others by ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours;
* taking and damaging belongings;
* extortion and manipulation e.g. taking a young person’s lunch money; and
* cyber bullying such as abusive texts or messages.

**The Impact of Bullying**

Bullying can have both long and short-term effects on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.  The impact of bullying behaviour may lead to health issues, reduced self-confidence, poor or non-attendance at school, withdrawal from normal activities, loneliness, anxiety or depression, tearfulness, humiliation, feeling unsafe or fearful, changes to behaviour and/or physical appearance, aggression, demonstrating bullying behaviour towards others, eating disorders and self-harm/suicidal thoughts.

Bullying behaviour impacts on children’s and young people’s wellbeing and can affect their participation, attainment and inclusion.

**Raising Awareness and Prevention of Bullying**

It is important the Anti-Bullying message is kept at the forefront of everyone’s mind. This is achieved in the following ways:

* Challenging the idea that bullying behaviour is acceptable and part of growing up.
* Promoting strong positive relationship messages.
* Raising awareness of bullying behaviour through PSHE classes, assemblies, posters, leaflets, newsletters, surveys and group discussion.
* Raising awareness of Child Rights through the UNCRC
* Partnership working with agencies to challenge and educate pupils on social behaviour and the impact this can have on others.
* Upholding and exemplifying the school core values.

**Guidance For Parents and Carers**

Advice for parents/carers whose child reports being subjected to bullying behaviour:

* remain calm, listen to your child and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you;
* reassure your child that the bullying behaviour is not their fault;
* explain that bullying is never acceptable and every child has a right to feel safe;
* allow your child to tell the story;
* discuss possible courses of action with your child and what your child would like you to do for them;
* allow your child to have some sense of control over the actions to be taken;
* help your child identify strategies for dealing with any possible future incidents;
* advise your child to speak to an adult they trust, designated young person or friend;
* reassure your child that the issue will be handled sensitively;
* Contact the appropriate member of staff to discuss your concerns and the strategies and support that can be used to deal with the situation;

**Reporting, Responding and Recording Incidents**

**Reporting an incident - Pupils**

Any pupil who has a concern regarding bullying must report this to a member of staff.
Pupils can:

- Tell their Pastoral Care teacher
- Tell any member of school staff that they feel comfortable telling
- Tell someone at home
- Report through the Keep Safe Kids App. This can be reported anonymously by a child, parent or carer.
- Contact Childline (0800 11 11)

**Reporting an incident – Parents/Carers**

Parents/Carers should contact the school as early as possible if they suspect that their child is being bullied. Parents/Carers should contact their child’s Pastoral Care Teacher (or another member of the pupil support team that they may be working with) in the first instance. Relevant members of staff may be:

Ms A Penman PT Pastoral Care

Miss K Black PT Pastoral Care

Ms P Smith Home Link Worker

Mrs K McConville PT Inclusion

Ms G McKechnie Inclusion Support Assistant

**Responding and Recording to a Bullying Allegation**

Any member of staff may be involved in investigating an incident or a report of bullying.  A report should be taken seriously and acted upon.  The key to resolving any incidence of bullying is to ensure similar incidents do not occur.

If a member of staff is given information by a victim or third party, they should record the information on the Anti -Bullying Respect Me form (in the X Drive – Staff – Anti Bullying) and forward to the Anti- Bullying Co-ordinator.  Concerns may also arise from Pastoral Notification of Concern forms.  Additionally, a report may be made by a parent or carer.

In the first instance professional judgement should be used in deciding appropriate action.  If there is uncertainty about this, staff should consult with the relevant PT Pastoral Care, year group DHT, or DHT Pupil Support.

Initial actions may be counselling for both pupils experiencing and displaying bullying behaviour.  This can be done either individually or together, taking a Restorative Approach.  The pupil experiencing bullying behaviour should be interviewed within an agreed time to see if the problem has been resolved.

If there is further action required:

* It must be explained that the incident will be recorded
* Parents must be contacted
* The Anti- Bullying Respect Me form must be completed and passed to the Anti Bullying Co-ordinator to be recorded on SEEMIS in line with the Local Authority Guidelines.

**The proforma is not intended for use in recording every isolated incident of inappropriate behaviour.**

Each incident should be reviewed after an agreed period of time. After this period of time, staff should endeavour to meet with all children or young people involved to reassess the situation and the relationship between them. Contact will also be made with parents/carers to give them an update. The manner in which this review takes place will depend on the nature of the incident and age of those involved.

The Anti- Bullying Co-ordinator is responsible for the recording and overseeing of incidents on SEEMIS. Bullying incidents are carefully monitored and reported on annually.

**Children and Young People Experiencing/Displaying Bullying Behaviour**

Support for children and young people affected by bullying behaviour is essential both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review.  Peer support, staff support, parental support and support offered by partner agencies can all play a vital role in ensuring the child or young person feels listened to and supported. At Linwood High School we do this by:

* creating a climate where children have high expectations for themselves and others;
* creating a climate where all pupils feel respected and supported;
* providing additional support, where appropriate;
* encouraging friendships and supportive peers;
* developing restorative practices;
* creating systems for early identification of vulnerable young people:
* involve Parents/Carers; both to keep them informed of the support that is being provided for their Child and what action(s) the school is taking.

Bullying behaviour can be changed by:

* using solution focused approaches;
* enabling young people to reflect upon their behaviour and the impact it has on others;
* helping young people communicate to manage conflict more effectively;
* where possible adopting a restorative approach to resolve the problem;
* setting achievable individual goals;
* where required, imposing an appropriate sanction;
* challenging all forms of prejudice-based bullying;
* where required, involving other agencies and services; and
* encouraging children and young people to be involved in discussions about bullying.

**Additional Support for Children and Young People**

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| ORGANISATION | CONTACT DETAILS |
| respect*me* | [www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)0844 800 8600 |
| Childline | 0800 1111 |
| KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline | [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)0845 1 205 204 |
| Bullying Online | [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk) |
| LGBT Youth Scotland | [www.lbgtyouth.org.uk](http://www.lbgtyouth.org.uk) |
| National Bullying Helpline | www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk0300 323 0169 |