

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL'S



SBC:**INCLUDES** RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Ensuring safe, respectful and nurturing environments
for children and young people in the Scottish Borders



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RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

FOREWORD

Bullying in any shape or form is completely unacceptable and must be addressed promptly and effectively.

Bullying should never be seen as an inevitable part of growing up for any child.

All children and young people living in Scotland should have equal opportunities to succeed; bullying compromises this ambition.

Scotland's vision is that:

- every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults;
- children and young people and their parent(s), will have the skills and knowledge to prevent and/or respond appropriately to bullying;
- every child and young person who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available; and
- adults working with, or caring for, children and young people will follow a consistent and coherent approach in preventing and responding to bullying from Early Learning **and Childcare onwards**.

In Scottish Borders, it is our vision is that all our schools and learning establishments are safe, respectful and nurturing environments where bullying behaviour is never acceptable or tolerated. It is critical that those who play a role in the lives of children and young people across our region are equipped to prevent and respond effectively to incidents of bullying behaviour.

Bullying can exist in any learning establishment, and we recognise the detrimental impact it has on children and young people's lives. The current wellbeing indicators (GIRFEC) state that in children and young people are to do well, now and in the future, they need to be safe, included, responsible, respected, active, nurtured, achieving, and healthy.

Bullying has a negative impact on all those indicators for both the child or young people displaying bullying behaviour and those experiencing it.

We have the responsibility to challenge behaviour and attitudes that lead to bullying before incidents arise. We believe early intervention and prevention are key in reducing bullying behaviour. When incidents do arise, it is important there are proper procedures in place to ensure the appropriate action is taken, and this is recorded accurately and effectively.

I welcome this up-dated policy and the clear definition of bullying within it.

Councillor Julie Pirone

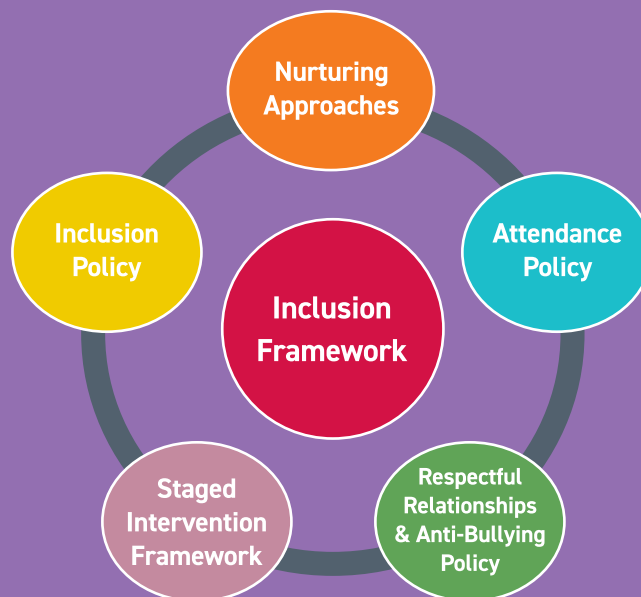
STOP BULLYING



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Borders Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a suite of policy and guidance documents in the Inclusion Framework, within the context of our overarching policy on Inclusion and our Nurturing Approaches Guidelines. This policy replaces all previous Education and Lifelong Learning Anti-Bullying Guidance, Policies and Procedures adopted by the local authority and those developed by individual learning establishments.



Based on [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People](#), the policy provides a coherent and consistent approach for staff, parents/carers, and children and young people on the prevention, early intervention and management of bullying behaviour.

The policy applies to all incidents of bullying behaviour within a learning establishment between children and young people. The policy also considers the impact of bullying behaviour that is experienced out with the learning establishment, as the impact of the behaviour is likely to affect the individual's motivation towards learning.

It is important that this policy sits within, and is considered part of, the learning establishments' positive behaviour and relationships policy approach. In order to outline the procedures and actions which learning establishments will undertake to embed this policy, each establishment should complete a **Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Establishment Statement** and update this every 3 years (Appendix1).

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CENSUS 2022 – WHAT DOES THE DATA TELL US?

In March 2022, Scottish Borders schools took part in a Health and Wellbeing Census where P5-7 children in primary schools and S1-S3 young people in secondary schools were asked directly about their experience of bullying. The results were as follows:

BEEN BULLIED

Q27. Have you been bullied in the last year?	1. Yes	2. No	3. Prefer not to say	Respondents to Question
P5	46%	39%	16%	944
P6	42%	44%	14%	954
P7	38%	51%	12%	972
Grand Total	42%	45%	14%	2870

S1-3 Q42. Have you been bullied in the last year?	1. Yes	2. No	3. Prefer not to say	Respondents To Question
S1	34%	55%	12%	785
S2	28%	63%	9%	694
S3	25%	69%	6%	730
Grand Total	29%	62%	9%	2209

WHERE BULLIED

28. Where have you been bullied?	Q28.1. At school	Q28.2. Somewhere else (including on the way to or from school)	Q28.3. Online / Social media / gaming platform	Grand Total
P5	35%	18%	12%	973
P6	34%	17%	12%	986
P7	30%	15%	12%	1006
Grand Total	33%	17%	12%	2965

S1-3 Q43 - Where have you been bullied? (% of all responses)	S1-3 Q43.1. At school	S1-3 Q43.2. Somewhere else (including on the way to or from school)	S1-3 Q43.3. Online / Social media / gaming platform
S1	26%	8%	10%
S2	20%	6%	7%
S3	20%	7%	10%
Grand Total	22%	7%	9%

HOW BULLIED

29. How were you bullied?	Q29.1. Name calling	Q29.2. Rumours spread	Q29.3. Hurtful comments	Q29.4. Threats	Q29.5. Pictures or videos of you shared with others	Q29.6. Embarrassed or made to feel foolish	Q29.7. Physically hurt	Grand Total
P5	30%	10%	25%	14%	4%	16%	16%	973
P6	30%	13%	25%	14%	4%	16%	16%	986
P7	29%	16%	25%	13%	6%	18%	15%	1006
Grand Total	30%	13%	25%	14%	5%	17%	16%	2965

S1-3 Q44 - How were you bullied? (% of all responses)	S1-3 Q44.1. Name calling	S1-3 Q44.2. Rumours spread	S1-3 Q44.3. Hurtful comments	S1-3 Q44.4. Threats	S1-3 Q44.5. Pictures or videos of you shared with others	S1-3 Q44.6. Embarrassed or made to feel foolish	S1-3 Q44.7. Physically hurt
S1	21%	12%	17%	8%	5%	11%	10%
S2	18%	11%	15%	7%	5%	12%	5%
S3	17%	12%	16%	6%	6%	12%	4%
Grand Total	19%	12%	16%	7%	5%	12%	7%

ONLINE BULLYING (S1 – S3 ONLY)

S1-3 Q45. How often do other children pick on you by sending emails, through messaging or posting something online?	1. Most days	2. About once a week	3. About once a month	4. Every few months	5. Never	6. Prefer not to say	Respondents To Question
S1	5%	7%	8%	16%	51%	13%	257
S2	4%	9%	7%	19%	49%	11%	192
S3	5%	8%	7%	24%	47%	10%	180
Grand Total	5%	8%	7%	19%	49%	12%	629

REPORT BULLYING

Q30. Did you report the bullying to anyone?	1. Yes	2. No	3. Prefer not to say	Respondents to Question
P5	64%	19%	17%	427
P6	63%	19%	18%	402
P7	59%	30%	11%	366
Grand Total	62%	23%	15%	1195

S1-3 Q46. Did you report the bullying to anyone?	1. Yes	2. No	3. Prefer not to say	Respondents To Question
S1	55%	31%	14%	261
S2	49%	44%	7%	191
S3	50%	39%	12%	179
Grand Total	52%	37%	11%	631

REPORTING BULLYING RESULTS

Q31. Did reporting the bullying to anyone...?	1. Make the situation better	2. Make the situation worse	3. Nothing changed	4. Prefer not to say	Respondents to Question
P5	52%	9%	25%	14%	266
P6	55%	10%	24%	10%	248
P7	55%	13%	26%	6%	216
Grand Total	54%	11%	25%	10%	730

S1-3 Q47. Did reporting the bullying to anyone...?	1. Make the situation better	2. Make the situation worse	3. Nothing changed	4. Prefer not to say	Respondents To Question
S1	57%	9%	25%	10%	141
S2	38%	10%	42%	10%	92
S3	46%	13%	33%	8%	90
Grand Total	48%	10%	32%	9%	323

TAKE PART IN BULLYING

Q32. How often have you taken part in bullying another pupil(s) at school in the past couple of months?	1. Not at all	2. Once or twice	3. Around two or three times a month	4. About once a week	5. Several times a week	6. Prefer not to say	Respondents to Question
P5	76%	12%	2%	1%	1%	8%	936
P6	80%	11%	2%	0%	1%	6%	953
P7	79%	14%	2%	0%	1%	4%	971
Grand Total	78%	12%	2%	0%	1%	6%	2860

S1-3 Q48. How often have you taken part in bullying another pupil(s) at school in the past couple of months?	1. Not at all	2. Once or twice	3. Around two or three times a month	4. About once a week	5. Several times a week	6. Prefer not to say	Respondents To Question
S1	83%	11%	2%	0%	0%	4%	773
S2	80%	12%	1%	1%	1%	5%	686
S3	82%	11%	1%	1%	1%	4%	725
Grand Total	82%	11%	1%	1%	1%	4%	2184

The [Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22](#) revealed that children and young people from African, Caribbean, Black, Mixed, or multiple minority ethnic groups, as well as Asian backgrounds, were less likely than average to report being bullied in the past year. However, the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights 2022 [report on racially motivated bullying](#) found that 83% of schools did not record incidents of racially motivated bullying.

Gender differences also exist. The [Health Behaviour in School-aged Children 2021/22](#) survey indicated that bullying behaviour is generally more common among boys than girls. Additionally, the [Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021/22](#) found that girls were more likely than boys to report being bullied in the past year.

[Research carried out by the University of London](#) found that children and young people with disabilities are more likely to be bullied than their peers.

The [2023 Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research](#) found that 27% of secondary school teachers and 6% of primary school teachers had encountered pupils using digital technology abusively (e.g. malicious posting of comments, photos, videos) in the classroom at least once in the week before the survey, highlighting the scale of the issue

The [Programme for International Student Assessment \(PISA 2022\) report](#) also found that a higher proportion of students in Scotland reported experiencing bullying at least weekly (10.6%), slightly above the OECD average (9.4%).

The [Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children 2021/22](#) survey found around one in 10 (11%) boys and girls reported they had been bullied at school at least 2–3 times a month in the past couple of months.

TERMS OF REFERENCE USED WITHIN THE POLICY

LEARNING ESTABLISHMENT

A learning establishment is any educational environment, which delivers the outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. This will include early childhood centres, primary, special and secondary schools.

External providers funded by Scottish Borders Council such as early years partners, specialist educational providers, post-16 training provisions, youth work providers, arts and cultural development, and after school clubs and groups are encouraged to adopt, where appropriate, the guidance contained within this policy document.

This single policy will apply in all learning establishments. Heads of learning establishments should ensure that the policy and procedures are being implemented and monitored.

PARENT/CARER

Parent/Carer is used to describe parents, carers, kinship carers and any other adult with a primary caring responsibility for a child or young person.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP

A respectful relationship is based upon mutual trust, honesty, kindness, consideration and fairness, bringing out the best in those involved.



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 1 - RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

In Scottish Borders learning establishments, adults should work together with children and young people to create an environment that encourages respect, celebrates difference and promotes positive relationships and behaviour. Children and young people are more likely to develop self-confidence, resilience and positive views about themselves where open and respectful relationships exist between adults and other children and young people.

The starting point for promoting respectful relationships and behaviour is the provision of a:

- coherent and inclusive curriculum
- effective and engaging learning and teaching
- whole school nurturing ethos based on positive relationships
- whole school commitment to inclusion

SBC Includes: [Inclusion Policy](#) Jan 2020

All of our learning establishments should promote respectful relationships based on care, trust, respect, honesty, kindness and justice, seeking to realise and harness the full potential of all young people and bring out the best in them, especially in challenging situations such as those created by bullying.

School staff play a vital role in shaping the culture of respect within their learning community. By consistently modelling respectful relationships in their interactions with pupils, parents, and carers, staff demonstrate the values of kindness, fairness, honesty, and empathy. This includes actively listening, using inclusive language, showing appreciation for diversity, and resolving conflicts constructively. When staff uphold these principles in everyday practice—whether in classrooms, corridors, or conversations with families—they reinforce the expectation that all members of the school community are entitled to feel safe, valued, and respected. This modelling not only sets a standard for pupil behaviour but also builds trust and partnership with parents and carers, strengthening the whole-school approach to preventing and responding to bullying.



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 2 - ETHOS AND CULTURE

[Respect for All](#) states: *'The most successful anti-bullying interventions are embedded within a positive climate, ethos and culture that clearly articulates and embeds inclusion, diversity and human rights.'*

Health and Wellbeing is the responsibility of all staff, and it is a critical factor in creating and maintaining a positive ethos within all learning establishments. The guidance contained within this policy is informed by the overarching principles of the SBC Includes: [Inclusion Policy](#) and [Nurturing Approaches Guidelines](#).

All learning establishments should work to create a positive ethos and culture of respect and trust based upon shared values. Adults do not expect to be verbally or physically abused by colleagues or friends, and children and young people have the same right to be free from bullying and to feel safe in their environments.

An inclusive culture and ethos will minimise incidences of bullying however, any bullying behaviour is unacceptable and should be dealt with in line with the policies and procedures contained within this document.

THE FOLLOWING PROACTIVE APPROACHES ARE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF PREVENTING BULLYING HAPPENING IN THE FIRST PLACE:

- pro-actively promoting an understanding of bullying and its impact
- modelling how to treat others with compassion and respect
- creating an open and safe space to talk

APPROACHES TO SUPPORT PREVENTING OR REDUCING THE INCIDENCE AND EFFECTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IN LEARNING ESTABLISHMENTS MAY INCLUDE:

- Establishing an ethos which places an emphasis on respecting, valuing and caring for self and others
- Establishing a climate where all members of the learning community, irrespective of age or status, promote and model respectful relationships and values
- Vision, Values and Aims statements which place an emphasis on mutual respect, and which are agreed, discussed and revisited frequently with all staff, children and young people and parents/ carers
- Completion of a Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Statement, aligned with council policy, which makes clear that bullying is unacceptable and sets out everyone's responsibility in preventing and responding to bullying
- Involvement of staff, children and young people and parents/ carers in the completion of a Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Statement
- Responsible Use of Mobile Technology Policy developed with staff, children/young people and parents/ carers within the context of the setting
- Provision of appropriate staff training in recognising and dealing appropriately with acts of bullying
- Taking seriously any report or allegation of bullying behaviour, investigating and taking appropriate action
- Providing a variety of means to allow children and young people 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 as they change their behaviour. The approaches taken should always take in account the individual needs of each child or young person
- Involving parents/carers, as appropriate, in supporting both children and young people who are bullied and those who are displaying bullying behaviour
- Ongoing recording and monitoring of bullying incidents. Monitoring bullying incidents is essential and can help to identify recurring patterns, thereby encouraging early intervention. This can also help identify training (CLPL) needs for everyone working with children and young people (Reference Section 9)

In their '[Model Anti-Bullying Policy Template](#)', respectme state:

'Embedding anti-bullying interventions, based upon mutual respect and inclusive practice is vital to a healthy school culture and ethos.'

For examples of initiatives designed to prevent and/or respond to bullying visit the document [Principles for policy development from respectme](#).

IN ADDITION TO THE APPROACHES SUGGESTED ABOVE FOR ALL LEARNING ESTABLISHMENTS, EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE SETTINGS AND SCHOOLS IN PARTICULAR MAY CONSIDER:

- Including anti-bullying education within the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum for all children and young people as well as through cross-curricular and whole school approaches
- Addressing anti-bullying through, for example, assemblies, circle time, restorative approaches and co-operative learning methodologies
- Working towards and becoming a Rights Respecting School

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 3 - WHAT DO WE MEAN BY BULLYING?

Scottish Borders Council has adopted the national definition of bullying, as set out in [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People \(RfA\)](#):

"Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in."

"The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out." (respectme,2024)

THIS BEHAVIOUR CAN INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened (face to face and/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)
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phones/tablets
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online).
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online)
- Increasing the reach and impact of bullying or prejudice through the recruitment and/or involvement of a wider group

This behaviour can harm people mentally, emotionally, socially, and physically. The actual behaviour, such as actions, looks, messages, confrontations, or physical interventions, does not always need to be repeated for it to have a lasting impact; the fear of the behaviour reoccurring can have a lasting effect. Bullying is more likely to occur in the context of an existing imbalanced relationship but may also happen where no previous or current relationship exists. It can be carried out by an individual or sometimes involve a group of people.

ONLINE BULLYING

In today's digital age online bullying, or cyberbullying, is a major issue impacting children and young people. This type of bullying utilizes digital tools like social media, messaging apps, gaming forums, and mobile devices to intimidate, isolate, or humiliate individuals. The impact of this can be as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour and should be taken as seriously as offline bullying.

Online bullying should be viewed within the context of the relationships and emotions involved, rather than simply as a technological issue to be resolved. It is related to the location of the bullying rather than being a distinct type of behaviour, as many common bullying actions like spreading rumours, exclusion from group dynamics, and threats can occur both online and offline. However, technology has amplified the complexity and reach of bullying through non-consensual image sharing, video footage, photo editing, transient messaging, and fake accounts, creating a global environment that requires careful, informed, and nuanced handling. Some online behaviours may also constitute criminal offences.

ICT/Mobile phone policies can be a helpful tool in reinforcing the consequences of misuse of mobile technology, the Scottish Government have written useful guidance on developing such a policy:

[Guidance on Mobile Phones in Scotland's Schools \(Update 2024\)](#)

Scottish Borders Council have also produced the following guidance:

[Responsible Use of Mobile Technology](#)

Scottish Borders Council also recommend consulting the following website for online safety advice and support:

[South West Grid for Learning \(SWGfL\) Safe, Secure, Online](#)

BULLYING, MENTAL HEALTH AND TRAUMA

Bullying has well-documented mental health consequences for children and young people, including anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, sleep/eating disorders, self-harm, somatic symptoms, and suicidality. These effects can persist into late adolescence and beyond, contributing independently to mental health problems.

[Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](#), such as social exclusion, emotional neglect, or physical abuse, are strong predictors of bullying behaviour. Greater exposure to ACEs increases the risk of engaging in or experiencing bullying during adolescence. Trauma from these experiences can leave a lasting, harmful impact on how individuals perceive themselves and the world, making it crucial to address trauma in anti-bullying efforts.

LANGUAGE AND USE OF "LABELS"

When talking about bullying, it is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies', 'victims' or 'perpetrators'. 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 "people experiencing bullying behaviour towards them" and "people 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 if it has no real impact on the child. Such behaviour should always be challenged, even if it is not bullying.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

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

- Change in attendance at school
- Change in achievement levels
- Unexplained injuries, neglect of appearance, torn clothing
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Changes in eating pattern
- Social withdrawal/isolation
- Mood changes
- Depression
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Changing social media accounts

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.

BULLYING OR CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR?

Bullying does not have a legal definition in Scotland and is not classified as a crime on its own. However, some behaviours that are seen or reported as bullying might involve actions that are criminal. It's crucial to examine the specific details and context of each situation to differentiate between bullying and actions that could be considered criminal offences.

Examples of criminal offences include the following:

Physical behaviour: peer-on-peer violence, including verbal abuse, physical aggression, and physical violence, can have both short- and long-term impacts on mental and physical health. Intent to cause harm, even without injury, may be considered assault.

Sexual behaviour: involving coercion or inappropriate touching is classified as sexual assault or abuse, a form of gender-based violence (GBV). More information about GBV, is available within the Scottish Government's [framework on preventing and responding to gender-based violence in schools](#).

Online behaviour: can include harassment, abuse, and harm, with some actions potentially being illegal.

Hate crime: Bullying motivated by prejudice can resemble hate crime, which involves malice towards a group based on a relevant characteristic and includes criminal actions like assault or graffiti. The [Hate Crime and Public Order \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#) addresses such behaviours.



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 4 - PREJUDICE-BASED BULLYING

Bullying often happens because of complicated social and relationship issues, usually involving an imbalance of power. This imbalance can exist even if the people involved don't have a prior relationship. Differences like popularity, physical strength, or economic status can make some children and young people more likely to be bullied due to these inequalities.

Respect for All states: *“Prejudice based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice, based on dislike of an individual’s actual or perceived identity and reflects wider societal trends of inequality and power. Prejudice comes in a variety of distinct forms and prejudice-based bullying can have wide-ranging impacts on children and young people’s health and wellbeing.”*

Prejudice can escalate and manifest in various ways, but not all prejudice-based behaviours are classified as bullying.

Bullying can be related to various characteristics, such as socio-economic background, family circumstances, or physical appearance. [The Equality Act 2010](#) protects individuals with certain characteristics (disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) from discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

The Scottish Government has produced specific guidance on [supporting transgender young people in schools](#), preventing and [responding to gender-based violence in schools](#), and resources are also available to support schools on [responding to racism and racist incidents](#). respectme and LGBT Youth Scotland also published a resource for schools and organisations on [effectively challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia](#).

INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality means that people’s identities are complex and can be affected by many different factors at the same time. Children and young people who face more than one type of inequality might experience bullying from multiple prejudices. Staff, parents, and others should think about these overlapping inequalities when dealing with bullying.

Structural inequalities are the unfair distribution of privilege, resources, safety, and power that benefit certain groups over others. These inequalities can cause bullying based on protected characteristics within or between groups.



INTERNALISED PREJUDICE

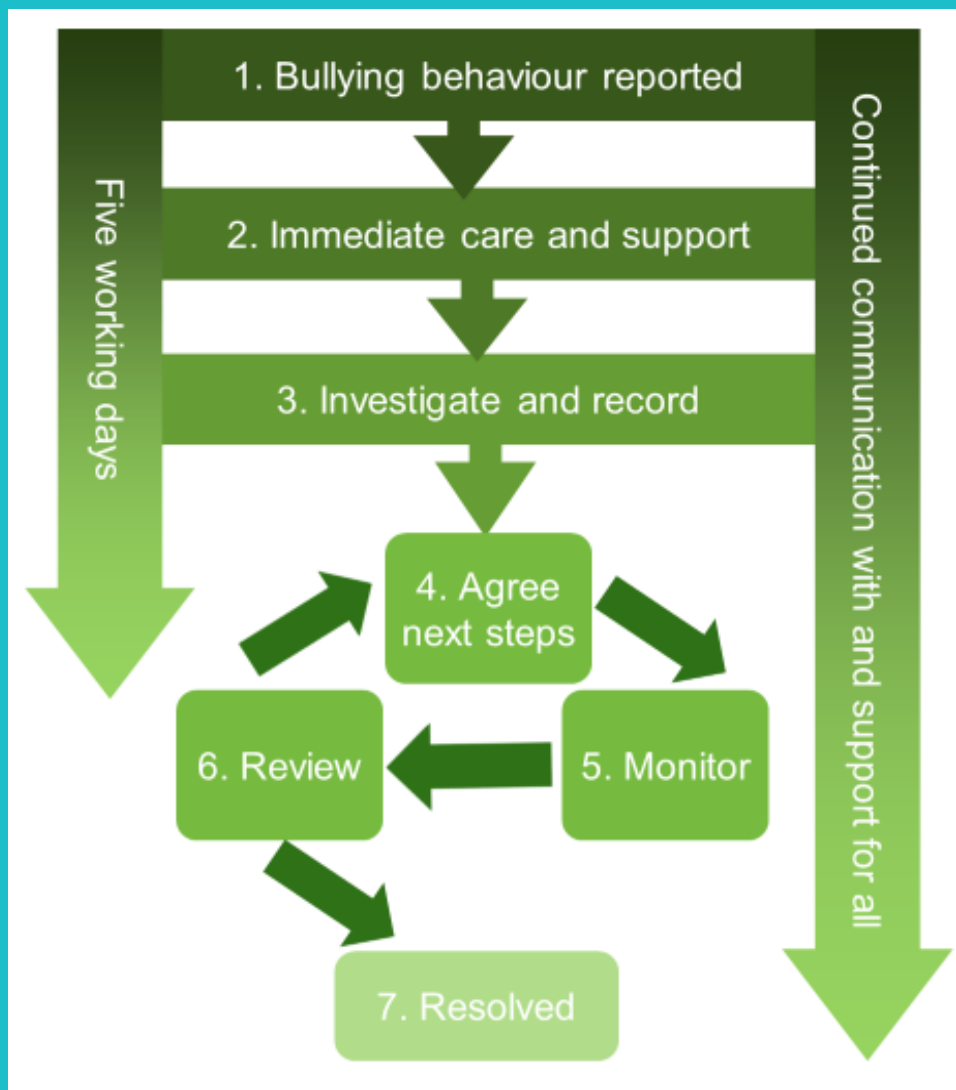
This happens when children and young people believe stereotypes and discriminatory views, which damage their self-esteem, confidence, and sense of belonging. They might downplay or not recognise prejudice-based bullying. Staff may need to address these prejudices even if the child being targeted doesn't mention it.

INTERGROUP PREJUDICE

Intergroup prejudice happens when bullying occurs within minority groups, like racism among children from different ethnic backgrounds or misogyny among girls. It's important to create a space where children feel confident to recognise and talk about different types of prejudice.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 5 - WHAT TO DO IF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IS EXPERIENCED



FURTHER GUIDANCE CAN BE FOUND ON THE SUBSEQUENT PAGES

1. BULLYING BEHAVIOUR REPORTED

Staff may become concerned about a child or young person when, for example, they witness something that may be construed as bullying behaviour, or a child, young person or parent/carer reports to them that they are experiencing bullying behaviour. How the member of staff reacts is crucial. Children and young people may have gone through a lot of upset before reporting an incident of bullying to an adult. A child's experience may be directly affected by the response they get from the adult.

2. CARE AND SUPPORT

It is crucial for staff to listen and get it right; offer support whenever required and be mindful of the potential need for their support, no matter how busy they are at the time. The child/young person may have chosen to report bullying behaviour at a less than convenient moment. If it is not possible to speak to them there and then, it is important for the staff member to acknowledge how the child/young person is feeling. The staff member should reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing by reporting the bullying and should arrange a time when they will speak to them about it further. The timeline for this care and support is immediate.

3. INVESTIGATE AND RECORD

Staff should gently encourage the child/young person to talk, find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – or ask them to write it down if that is easier. It may be necessary to do some probing by asking open and direct questions, but staff should find out as much as possible.

Keeping notes may be helpful but it is important that the child/young person knows why and how the notes will be used. This information would form the basis for further investigation and recording. Schools have a responsibility to record the information on SEEMIS through the Bullying and Equalities module (see section 9). Other learning establishments will have their own recording system, which should be used.

respectme recommend that the most effective way for staff to structure their response to bullying is to ask themselves these questions:

- 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?
- Is there evidence of any prejudice-based attitude or behaviour?

CONSENT

Responding to bullying behaviour requires a partnership approach – when it is safe to do so. The response to incidents of bullying behaviour will normally involve the learning establishment staff, children/young people, parents/carers and partner organisations if appropriate.

Learning establishments should seek to inform and involve parents in supporting resolution of bullying behaviour. However, it is important the children and young people are aware of the learning establishment's intentions and actions regarding parental involvement.

“There is no age limit on the right of the child or young person to express their views. However, in Scotland, under data protection law, children and young people aged 12 or over are presumed to be mature enough to provide their own consent, unless there is any reason to think that they are not. If there is disagreement between the child or young person and their parents and it is not possible to reach agreement, professional judgement will be required, with consideration for the rights of the child under Article 12 of the UNCRC.” [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) Practice Guidance 4 - Information sharing.](#)

It should be noted that whilst any learner’s view, as expressed, should be considered, there may be situations whereby it is deemed to be in their best interests that their parents or third parties are advised of the situation.

Consent may need to be sought and re-sought at different intervals throughout a bullying incident to manage risk, harm, and consideration of child protection. Consent can be verbal and will be recorded within the Management Information System - SEEMiS for Schools or other learning establishments recording system.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Responding to bullying behaviour requires a commitment to confidentiality by all parties – this should take account of the right to confidentiality of all involved:

- child/young person experiencing bullying
- parents/carers of child/young person experiencing bullying
- child/young person perceived/actually demonstrating bullying
- parents/carers of child/young person demonstrating bullying

When responding to and managing incidents it may be appropriate in some circumstances for a confidentiality agreement to be put in place for all parties. It will be made explicit to the child/young person the circumstance in which confidentiality may have to be broken to ensure they are protected from harm and kept safe. Child Protection should be considered and discussed at this stage. Involvement of Police Scotland may influence the direction and timing of the investigation. HR policies and procedures should be followed if a member of staff is involved (see Section 8).

CHILD PROTECTION

Where there is a Child Protection concern, this will supersede the Respectful Relationships and anti-bullying policy and the following policy should be followed:

[Scottish Borders Child Protection Procedures \(sb-cpc-procedures.org.uk\)](http://sb-cpc-procedures.org.uk)

4. AGREED NEXT STEPS

At this stage, staff need to be very clear with the child or young person about what happens next. The child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour needs to retain some feeling of control over the situation. It is vital that they are involved in deciding and agree to the next steps. Sometimes a particular incident can be resolved 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.

“There isn’t any single approach when responding to bullying, and what works for one child or situation, may not work for another. Children and young people value choices.” [respectme - Responding to bullying](#)

If staff are unsure of how to respond or are not sure what will work, they should explore different options, ask what the child/young person thinks would happen if a certain course of action were followed, and explore alternatives.

****Steps 1 – 4 should be completed within 5 school/working days****

5. MONITOR

Monitoring meetings should be scheduled with the children/young people involved at increasing intervals of time as appropriate to the circumstances to ensure the agreed course of action is effective. This provides reassurance and builds confidence for all involved. All parties involved should mutually agree a date for the monitoring to stop.

If the agreed course of action is not effective, then step 4 should be revisited and a new agreement made.

6. REVIEW

Following the agreed date for monitoring to stop, there should be a date set for review to ensure that the bullying behaviour has not started again. Regular check-ins with all parties involved would also be beneficial between the end of monitoring and the review date.

**** Step 4, 5 and 6 should be seen as ongoing until the situation is resolved****

7. RESOLVED

When all parties agree that the bullying behaviour incident has been resolved satisfactorily, then the incident can be ‘signed off’ in SEEMIS (see Section 9).

COMMUNICATION WITH ALL PEOPLE INVOLVED

There should be regular communication with all parties involved throughout the process and a record of all communication should be kept. For schools records of communication should be kept in pastoral notes, however, a report on the Assure system may also be required.

CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR ALL PEOPLE INVOLVED

Initially, it is critical to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual experiencing or displaying bullying behaviour. As outlined in step 2, care and support needs to continue throughout the process for all people involved.

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 to aid recovery.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any individual has the right to express their dissatisfaction and complain if they feel that the learning establishment has not fulfilled the expectations of this policy or any agreed management plans.

Scottish Borders Council defines a complaint as:

“Any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.”

It is encouraged that complaints are responded to and resolved within the learning establishment; however, complainants have the right to lodge a formal complaint to the local authority.

[Scottish Borders Council Complaints Handling Procedure](#)



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 6 - WHAT ABOUT THE CHILD WHO IS DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR?


"Children and young people who exhibit bullying behaviour need adult support to understand the underlying thoughts and feelings driving their actions, and to develop healthier responses and relationships. It is crucial to help them recognise the harm their behaviour causes, repair relationships when possible and desired, and challenge prejudicial attitudes through education and building empathy." (Respect for All, 2024)

THE REASONS WHY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MAY GET INVOLVED IN BULLYING BEHAVIOUR ARE MANY. SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- to impress or establish leadership amongst a peer group
- to create a group identity by attacking an outsider
- pressure to conform – punishing non-conformity
- lack of social skills
- jealousy
- have been bullied themselves
- family and/or social problems
- lack of understanding of the impact of bullying

NURTURE PRINCIPLE 5 STATES THAT ALL BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATION, IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR OF THE CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON MAY STEM FROM AN UNMET NEED, IN THIS CASE STAFF SHOULD:

- Deal with the behaviour in the same way as you would with any type of distressed behaviour
- Describe the behaviour that is causing harm – avoid labelling
- Identify what is causing the bullying behaviour
- Listen and support to identify thoughts/feelings behind the behaviour
- Have conversations with parents whose insights may shed light on a situation not previously considered
- Support children and young people to find other ways to manage difficult feelings
- Be prepared for a strong reaction from parents/carers and children and young people
- Be prepared to address prejudicial attitudes that may be behind the bullying behaviour
- Support repair of relationships, where possible
- Address what is happening behind the behaviour, even when the bullying has stopped



There will be a wide range of actions or consequences that a learning setting 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.

RESTORATIVE APPROACHES

Restorative approaches articulate with and compliment all other relational approaches and strongly influence the emotional atmosphere in a learning community. A restorative approach recognises that people are the experts of their own solutions and if implemented effectively will promote accountability and maximise personal responsibility. A restorative approach provides a framework of values, thinking and language that is helpful when 'something' needs to be restored. In different contexts this could be:

- effective communication
- relationships or friendships
- empathy and understanding for another person's perspective
- respect (this could mean a sense of security, self-confidence, self-respect, or dignity)
- understanding the impact of our own behaviour on others
- repairing or replacing damaged materials or resources

Being restorative can be proactive (relationship building) or responsive (relationship repairing) and can be used at every level from everyday informal interactions to more formal restorative meetings. All practitioners can behave in a restorative way by demonstrating restorative values and using restorative thinking and language.

EXCLUSION

Exclusion from school should only be used as a last resort. It should be a proportionate response where there is no alternative. It is the responsibility of all Scottish Borders Council's schools and learning establishments to keep all children and young people fully included, engaged and involved in their education and to improve outcomes for all, with a particular focus on those who might be at risk from exclusion.

While individual circumstances must be taken into account, the grounds for exclusion are the same for all children and young people. In line with National guidance in [Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: a positive approach to managing school exclusions \(2017\)](#) and [Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: a positive approach to the promotion and management of attendance in Scottish schools](#), Scottish Borders Council have produced guidelines on how to Manage School Exclusions. These can be found in [Policy Guidance on Managing School Exclusions](#).

Other learning establishments should consult their own policies and procedures for excluding children and young people.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 7 - PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS

Parents and carers are the people who know and understand their children's behaviour and their physical and mental wellbeing best. They have a key role to play in supporting their children when they experience or display bullying behaviour.

Parents/carers are often able to offer advice to staff on extra support their child might need or any creative solutions that may help resolve the situation. It is important that staff listen to, and respond to, the concerns of parents/carers and ensure that there is clear communication between them when dealing with bullying incidents relating to their children (see flow chart in Section 5).

When writing their Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Statement, learning establishments should consult with parents/carers to draw on the wealth of knowledge that they have.

PARENTS/CARERS ARE REQUESTED TO:

- Be aware of the respectme, Scotland's Anti-bullying Service: [Information and Support for Parents and Carers](#) and their publication [Bullying...A Guide for Parents and Carers](#)
- Work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying cannot thrive
- Inform learning establishments of bullying behaviour at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter
- Address their children's behaviour when it affects others negatively and refrain from engaging directly in a negative way with any other children involved or their parents/carers/families
- Manage their children's use of electronic devices, mobile technologies and social media, including setting parental controls, ensuring privacy establishments are in place and adhering to age guidelines
- In the first instance, report any abuse to website providers and ensure their children unfriend or block persons potentially perpetrating abuse
- Be aware of the type of incidents which may have to be reported to the police – retain any evidence which may include screenshots, messages, images etc
- Understand we seek to understand the experiences, and address the needs of all children and young people, who experience bullying behaviour as well as those who display bullying behaviour, within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support

- Be given the opportunity to express their views and help shape policy development in this area
- Be aware of the complaints process set out by the learning establishment and local authority and their rights with regard to these procedures (see Section 5 – Complaints Procedure)

PARENT/CARER INVOLVEMENT CAN TAKE THE FORM OF:

- Parent Councils as partners with the learning establishment
- Involvement with development of the 'Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Statement' for the learning establishment
- Parent education events around bullying
- Attendance at learning establishment open sessions where respectful relationships are modelled
- Involvement of parents in national Anti-Bullying week activities
- Involvement of parents in school assemblies dealing with current issues in bullying and its prevention
- Home-School Partnerships

PARENT AND CARER SUPPORT/INFORMATION

Information about bullying, what to look for and further advice for parents and carers is available on the following websites:

[Children First: Bullying - advice for parents to spot the signs of child bullying](#)

[Parent Club - Bullying at School](#)

[Experiencing bullying behaviour | Social and emotional factors | Specific support needs | Additional support | Parent Zone \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[I'm not happy with how my child's school is responding to bullying - Enquire](#)

[Every child's right to live free from bullying and harassment - Enquire](#)

[Talking to your child's school about bullying - Enquire](#)

[National Parent Forum Scotland](#)

[NSPCC - Keeping children safe online](#)

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 8 - STAFF WORKING IN SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL LEARNING ESTABLISHMENTS

Scottish Borders Council promotes a 'Zero Tolerance' approach to threats and violent and abusive behaviour towards staff.

If unacceptable behaviour is experienced, your Line Manager should be made aware in order to provide appropriate support.

The following policies have been developed to ensure Scottish Borders Council staff are supported:

[Dignity and Respect in the Workplace | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](#)

[Managing Customer Engagement Policy | Scottish Borders Council](#)

STAFF WELFARE

Staff Wellbeing Handbook:

The [Staff Wellbeing Handbook](#) is available online as a supportive tool. The purpose of this directory is to provide staff with a list of useful organisations and resources in relation to wellbeing topics. The handbook will be continually added to and updated quarterly.

If you have any individual queries, contact your line manager or email: askhr@scotborders.gov.uk

STAFF WORKING IN OTHER LEARNING ESTABLISHMENTS

Other learning establishments will have their own policies, procedures and support, which would be available if required.



RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

SECTION 9 – SEEMIS: RECORDING, REPORTING AND MONITORING OF BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATORY INCIDENTS/ALLEGED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

Schools are required to record all alleged incidents of bullying behaviour on the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module. To support a consistent approach to the use of SEEMiS to enter and maintain details of any alleged incident of bullying or discrimination reported, schools should follow the procedures outlined in [SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Protocol for SBC Schools Nov 24](#).

An allegation does not need to be proven before it is recorded. Instead, details of the reported incident should be documented, including information about the behaviour, who was involved, where and when it occurred, any potential underlying prejudice, details of any protected characteristics, and whether the impact suggests any wellbeing concerns or need for additional support. An investigation should follow, as outlined in Section 5, with the recording system being updated throughout the process to reflect the outcome and any actions taken.

In accordance with the UNCRC (including Article 12, which states that children and young people have the right to express their opinions and be heard, and Article 16, which grants them the right to privacy), the content of this record should be agreed upon with the child or young person whenever possible.

Each school should have a clear set of procedures for reporting and investigating reports of bullying behaviour. 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 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. A member of Senior Leadership Team in each learning setting should have responsibility for ensuring that procedures relating to reports of bullying are implemented and that the whole school reports available on SEEMiS are regularly monitored.

APPENDIX 1 - TEMPLATE TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL LEARNING ESTABLISHMENTS

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING: STATEMENT FOR CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE IN

Learning Setting Name

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL VISION

It is our vision that all learning establishments are safe, respectful and nurturing environments where bullying behaviour is never acceptable. It is therefore critical that those who play a role in the lives of children and young people in the Scottish Borders are equipped to prevent and respond effectively to incidents of bullying behaviour. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) in the Scottish Borders ensures that the child and their family are at the centre of policy and practice and that the views of the child, young person and their parents/carers are sought, listened to and taken into account when decisions are being made.

POLICY STATEMENT PURPOSE

In the Scottish Borders, learning establishments promote respectful relationships approaches.

This document builds on Scottish Borders Respectful Relationships and Anti-bullying Policy and outlines the steps that will be undertaken in [name of learning setting] to provide guidance to staff, parents/ carers and children/young people on the prevention and management of bullying behaviour. Our aim is to make [name of learning setting] a safe, respectful and nurturing environment where bullying behaviour is never acceptable.

RAISING AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Staff and Volunteers

In addition to promoting and role modelling respectful relationships and positive behaviour, all staff and volunteers in [name of learning setting] with a responsibility for children/young people will participate in the training and development listed below:

Please list the training that staff in the learning establishment will undertake in this box. See Appendix 2 for suggested training resources.

Pupils

In [name of learning setting] we actively and openly talk about and discuss bullying behaviour.

Listed below are the strategies / resources, which will be used to raise the children/young people's awareness and prevent bullying:

Please list the resources/strategies that staff in the learning establishment will use to raise awareness and prevent bullying with children and young people. See section 2 of the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying policy for suggestions.

RECORDING AND MONITORING STRATEGIES

In [name of learning setting] incidents of bullying are recorded and monitored, in accordance with the guidance in Scottish Borders Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy. Incidents will be recorded in the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module in schools (or manually in learning establishments who do not have access to SEEMiS).



REPORTING AND FEEDING BACK ABOUT BULLYING INCIDENTS

In [name of learning setting] children/young people, staff and parents will be made aware of the confidential and safe ways to report bullying behaviour.

Ways for Pupils to report bullying behaviour:

Please list the methods of reporting which are available to the children and young people along with the people they can report to.

Ways for parents to report bullying behaviour:

Please list the methods of reporting which are available to the parents/carers along with the people they can report to.

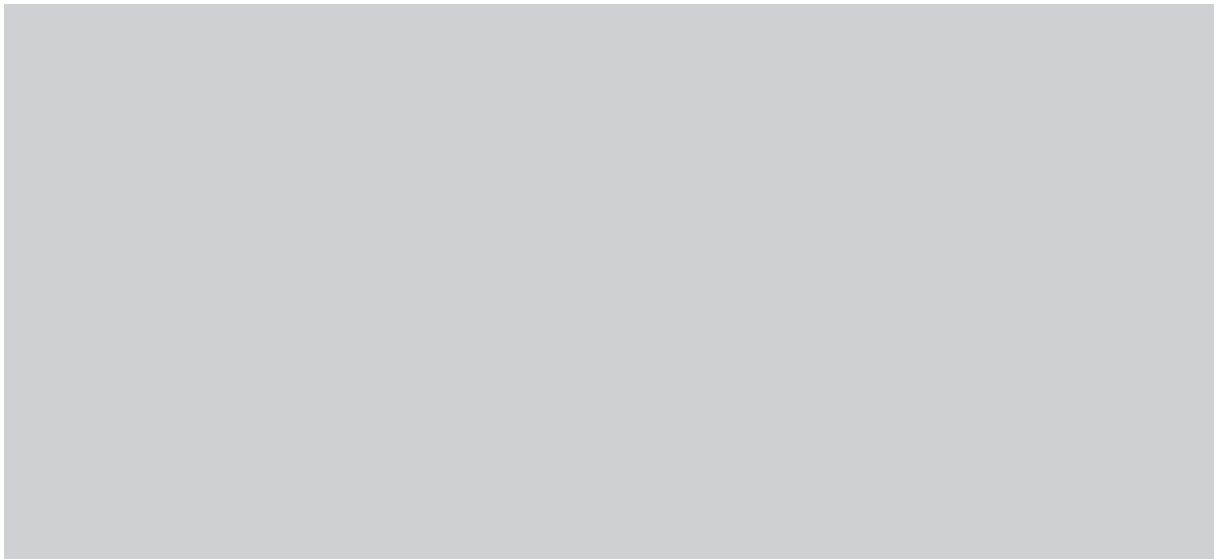
Ways for Staff to report bullying behaviour:

Please list the methods of reporting which are available to staff along with the people they can report to.

In [name of learning setting], [name of person] will be responsible for ensuring all parties are actively informed of progress made.

CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ON RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

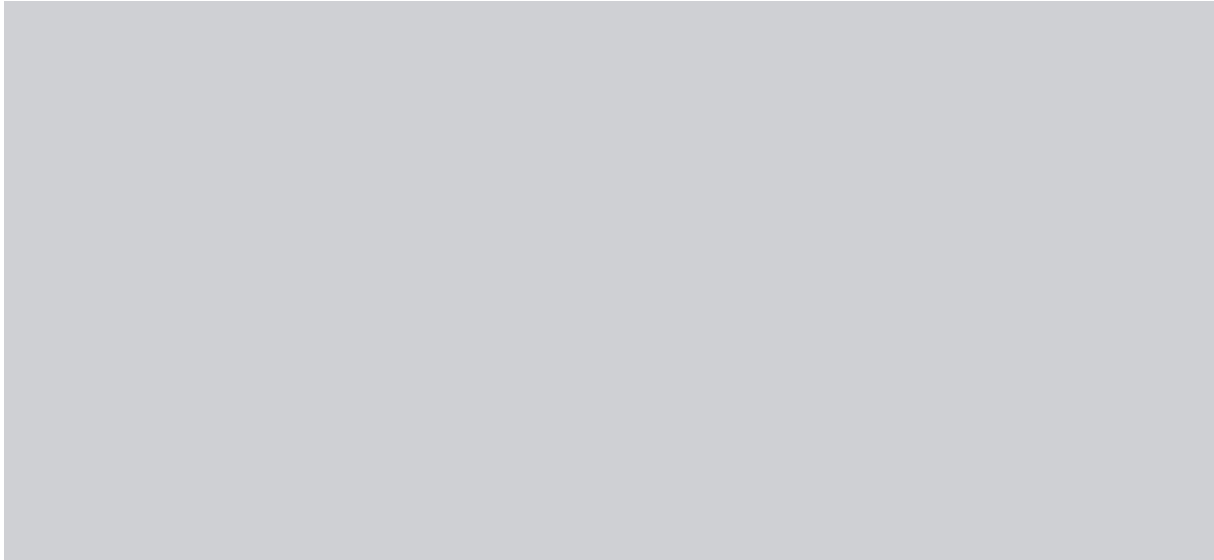
We have shared the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying poster with our children/young people and consulted with them in the creation of this statement. Some of their comments are shown below:





PARENT'S VIEWS ON RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

We have shared the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying parent leaflet with our parents/carers and consulted with them in the creation of this statement. Some of their comments are shown below:



Policy statement reviewed date (Every three years)

Head of [learning setting] Signature

Date:-

APPENDIX 2 - TRAINING AND SUPPORT

[‘Bullying...It’s Never Acceptable’](#)

An online professional learning resource from **respectme** adopts the Scottish Government’s anti-bullying guidance, [Respect for All](#). It seeks to define bullying and introduce practical strategies to address bullying behaviour when it occurs.

The [four online modules](#) consist of:

Module 1: Why address bullying? (approx. 28 minutes in length)

Module 2: Defining and recognising bullying behaviour (approx. 23 minutes in length)

Module 3: Preventing bullying: policy and practice (approx. 18 minutes in length)

Module 4: Responding to bullying (approx. 25 minutes in length)

[Free CPD online training \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](#)

Free CPD-certified anti-bullying online training for anyone that works with children and young people.

Restorative Practices Training for Schools

Contact [Emma Sowerby](#) Headteacher, Inclusion and Wellbeing Service


[LGBT Inclusive Education | National Platform \(lgbteducation.scot\)](#)

The one stop platform for teachers to access quality approved materials, resources, and professional learning linked to Scotland’s Curriculum to support the implementation of LGBT Inclusive Education. Complete the Stage 1 E-Learning module from the national “Delivering LGBT Inclusive Education” professional learning course, freely available to all teachers in Scotland. Stage 2 can be booked upon completion. This course should be completed by Primary and Secondary school teachers in Scotland.

[How to be One Good Adult](#)

An interactive resource developed by children and young people that can be used for communications and awareness raising about the importance of good relationships with adults for children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing.

[Timeline: An anti-sectarian professional learning resource | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)



This professional learning resource aims to increase staff knowledge of the historical context for sectarianism in Scotland. Available as an online presentation, the resource takes the user through different events in Scottish, English and Irish history that have had an effect on the making of modern Scotland.

It has been developed from the 'Timeline of Sectarianism in Scotland' found in 'Beyond a Culture of Two Halves', a resource originally developed by [YouthLink Scotland](#).

APPENDIX 3 - CASE STUDIES

[Berwickshire High School Whole School Approach to Early Intervention and Prevention of Bullying Behaviour Case Study and Resources and Resources](#)

Read about the approach taken by Berwickshire High School to address pupil concerns around the reporting of bullying behaviour using a QR code system. Access the PowerPoints used to launch the system to pupils in assembly.

[Stirches Primary School Case Study - Reach Out.docx](#)

Some pupils in Stirches Primary School reported that they did not feel safe in school and that they did not always have a member of staff that they could talk to, or did not find it easy to contact a member of staff about issues such as bullying. The response from Stirches primary School was their 'Reach Out' programme which gives the children access to the person they trust discreetly, quickly and efficiently.

[Map | respectme reward](#)

Click on the blue map pin drops in the link above to find case studies from primary and secondary schools across Scotland showing best anti-bullying practice under the headings: Prevention, Response, and Inclusion.

APPENDIX 4 - USEFUL LINKS

Respectme

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 (LGBT) Youth Scotland. Respectme develop resources for both training and awareness raising across Scotland free of charge.

[Respectme](#)

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. ParentLine 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

School Counselling Service - Mypas

Confidential individual support within the Scottish Borders for 10-18 year old children and young people where they can explore experiences, thoughts and feelings in a safe space without judgement.

www.mypas.co.uk

Time for Inclusive Education (TIE)

"Education Scotland - Time for Inclusive Education" refers to the initiative and national platform managed by the charity Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) on behalf of the Scottish Government to implement LGBT inclusive education in Scotland's schools. The platform provides resources, professional learning, and implementation toolkits to help teachers embed LGBT themes into the curriculum, making all learners feel included and helping to combat prejudice and bullying. This national effort aims to ensure that LGBT people and history are represented in a way that is suitable for all ages and stages of learning across the country.

[Time for Inclusive Education](#)

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 the 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.

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 anti-bullying 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

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.

[Education Scotland](#)

[A summary of anti-bullying resources | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

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 anti-bullying work across Scotland, as we understand the mental health impacts of bullying behaviour for both 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 anti-bullying 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.

[Home | SAMH](#)

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 male 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 establishments 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 support 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.

[Enable Scotland](http://www.enablemescotland.info)

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 lifestyles. STEP's remit includes supporting developments in inclusive educational approaches for Scotland's Travelling Communities and to address racism, harassment and bullying.

[STEP - Providing Flexible Learning for Travelling Communities \(ed.ac.uk\)](http://ed.ac.uk)

Changing Faces

Changing Faces is the charity that 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 anti-racist 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.

[Show Racism the Red Card - Home - Scotland](#)

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

The Children's Parliament

We are an independent national charity whose focus is on direct work with children through their participation in a group, project, consultation or event. We are concerned with empowerment and participation and so we create spaces where children learn and work with others to shape their lives and communities. We work with children in the context of family, school and community life to affirm the positive and aspire to do what we can to make the world a better place for ourselves and for others. We are concerned about the disconnect between many individuals, families and communities and society: we promote the idea, delivered through our practice that every child matters and every child can participate in civic society; we want to contribute toward a Scotland where we are positive about children. We believe that through strong and mutually respectful relationships, children will flourish with adult guidance and encouragement. An awareness, understanding and commitment to children's human rights provide a foundation for such relationships. We help local authorities; Scottish Government and other public bodies fulfil their legal obligations to promote and protect the human rights of everyone, to develop and deliver meaningful community engagement, and fulfil a duty of care toward children.

www.childrensparliament.org.uk

Kooth

Kooth is a free online counselling and emotional well-being support service providing children and young people aged 10 - 18 years (up to 19th birthday) in the Scottish Borders with a safe and secure means of accessing support with their emotional health and wellbeing needs from a professional team of qualified counsellors. By accessing Kooth children and young people can benefit from:

- **A free, confidential, anonymous and safe** way to receive support online.
- **Out of hours' availability.** Counsellors are available from 12noon to 10pm on weekdays and 6pm to 10 pm at weekends, every day of the year on a drop in basis.
- **Online Counselling** from a professional team of BACP qualified counsellors is available via 1-1 chat sessions or messaging on a drop in basis or via booked sessions.
- **Discussion Boards** which are all pre-moderated allow young people to access peer to peer support.
- **Online Magazine** full of moderated articles many of which are submitted by young people offering advice and guidance on a huge range of topics.
- **No referral** is required. Young people can register for Kooth independently at

www.kooth.com

Togetherall

- Togetherall is available free for all residents (16+) living within Scottish Borders.
- Togetherall provides a supportive, online community to get help. Trained professionals are available 24/7, and there is a choice of safe therapeutic services, including online self-help courses. This means anyone who may be struggling can get support at a time that suits them, direct from their device.
- The service is completely anonymous, and when a new member joins, they create an anonymous username, which does not identify them in any way.
- Residents can simply go to www.togetherall.com and register using their postal code.

APPENDIX 5 - PREJUDICE BASED BULLYING

Prejudice can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons...

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for many other reasons.

If you would like to find out more about the different types of prejudice-based bullying listed below, visit our useful links section in Appendix 4.

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 and physical appearance can be hugely important to children and young people, with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact upon their wellbeing.

Sexual Orientation and Homophobic Bullying

Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying: Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

Children and young people do not necessarily have to be lesbian, gay or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young people perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual young people; those that do not conform to gender norms and/or expectations; and those who have gay friends or family. Children with LGBT parents may also experience homophobic bullying. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.

Homophobic bullying 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.

Gender Reassignment / Transgender identity

The term 'transgender' is an 'umbrella term' for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, or an identity between or outside the two.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender or gender 'variant' children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways, including transphobic and homophobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

If children and young people are experiencing confusion over their gender identity, they may be reluctant to challenge bullying behaviour that could attract further attention to them.

Care Experience Young People

Children and young people who are care experienced are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons:

- Regular changes in schools or where they are placed
- 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

Forming relationships with peers and adults can be made even more difficult due to early childhood adversity.

Race and Ethnicity

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups, including the gypsy/ travelling community, may 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 behaviour. People who have no religion or belief are also protected under the Equality Act.

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 who do not conform to 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 certain ways 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 do not recommend 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 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 participate fully 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.

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.

Additional Support Needs

Bullying, whether linked to prejudicial attitudes or not, can sometimes create additional support needs for children and young people. There is specific legislation in this area in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009.

Further support can be accessed at:

[Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)

APPENDIX 6 - LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Children's rights and entitlements are fundamental to Scotland's approach to inclusive education. The legislative and policy framework place duties and expectations on early learning establishments, schools and local authorities to ensure that they deliver an inclusive education. This policy details the actions required by all learning establishments to ensure the ongoing development of inclusive practices within Scottish Borders Council.

In Scotland's Public Sector, organisations must have due regards to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

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 is detailed as follows :

UK Government and International

- Human Rights Act (1988)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (the "UNCRC Act")

Bullying is a violation of children's rights and is incompatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, now enacted in Scots Law. While the UNCRC does not explicitly state a right not to be bullied, any anti-bullying initiatives uphold several key rights outlined in the Convention. This includes the right of every child to live free from violence, abuse, and neglect (article 19), which includes protection from violence committed by other children, and places emphasis on their rights to education, health, and participation in decisions affecting their lives.

More information on the UNCRC can be found at the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland website [Home - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland \(cypcs.org.uk\)](https://www.cypcs.org.uk)

- European Convention on Human Rights (1950)
- Crime and Disorder Act (1998)
- Criminal Justice Act (2003)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003)
- The Children Act (2004)
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006)
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2007)
- Equality Act (2010)

The Equality Act 2010 act applies to many public sector organisations based in Scotland and sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination related to any of the nine protected characteristics.

The Act sets out the steps organisations must take to meet their General Public Sector Equality Duty, including planning outcomes to tackle inequality, reporting a variety of equality related information, gathering evidence and using it to improve policy, practice and procurement. These extra-legal obligations are called Equality Duties.

Scottish Government

The Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (as amended 2009)

Additional support is a broad and inclusive term. The Act provides the legal framework to support children and young people who, for whatever reason, including bullying, require additional support, long or short term, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning. This is our rights based, child centred and needs led approach.

- Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (Update 2024)
- Education (Scotland) Act (1980)
- Protection from Harassment(s) Act (1997)
- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act (2001)
- Standards in Scottish Schools Act (2000)
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

The principles of GIRFEC, where each child or young person should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included are also reflected in this policy. Health and Wellbeing is a central aspect of the curriculum and is the responsibility of all staff.

- Health Promoting Schools
- Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour in Scottish Schools
- Journey to Excellence
- National Care Standards
- Equality and Human Rights
- Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) (Scotland) Act 2018

Further Guidance

Supporting transgender young people in schools: guidance for Scottish schools:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-transgender-young-people-schools-guidance-scottish-schools/documents/>

LGBT Youth Scotland and RespectMe:

Effectively challenging homophobia, biphobia and transphobia:

<https://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Addressing-Inclusion-2020.pdf>

RespectMe:

Addressing Inclusion: [Effectively challenging racism in schools: https://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Addressing-Inclusion-Effectively-Challenging-Racism-in-Schools.pdf](https://respectme.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Addressing-Inclusion-Effectively-Challenging-Racism-in-Schools.pdf)

<http://www.kidscape.org.uk/parents/mychildisabully.html>

http://www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying_intro_txt.html

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/supportinglearners/positivelearningenvironments/inclusionandequality/challengingsectarianism/resources/index.asp>



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Throughout the process of writing this policy, a collaborative opportunity was given to a range of stakeholders to participate in focus groups to consult on the content. The focus groups were made up of pupils, parents and teaching staff from both primary and secondary schools across the Scottish Borders as well as elected members of Scottish Borders Council and representation from the following organisations: NHS, Social Work, Quarriers, LGBT Youth Scotland, Youth Borders, BANG, Live Borders and Action for Children.

Thank you to all who gave their valuable time, expertise, thoughts and opinions to aid in the coproduction of this policy.

You can get this document on audio CD, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

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