



Murrayburn Community Anti-Bullying Procedure

January 2023

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

City of Edinburgh Council is strongly committed to providing a safe environment for all people in its educational establishments. We are committed to ensuring positive relationships. Bullying, prejudice and discrimination are never acceptable and children, young people and staff have the right to learn and work in a safe, fair and secure environment.

This school procedure follows the City of Edinburgh Council's Communities and Families Procedure on 'Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People' (2020) which is based on '*Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People*'.

The emotional health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff is essential for our children to have the best start to life and to have successful life chances. We are committed to developing positive relationships between all in our school community: children, young people, staff and parents. It is recognised that individuals will make mistakes; through education, we aim to teach individuals and groups about the nature of mistakes made and repair and restore relationships in a compassionate manner which acknowledges the seriousness of any given incident(s).

We are a Rights Respecting School. This procedure covers the following articles of the UNCRC:

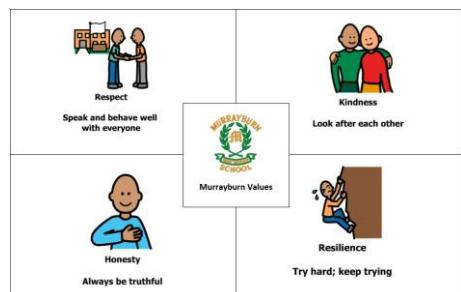
- Article 2 – You have the right to protection against discrimination.
- Article 19 – You have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.

Article 29 – You have the right to an education which develops your personality and your respect for other's rights and the environment.

This procedure has been revised and updated in consultation with staff, parent and pupil groups, including our Student Leaders, Parent Council and Pupil Equalities Group

The Murrayburn Primary School Vision states that:

Within our Murrayburn Community we focus on the importance of building positive relationships that ensure our children and families are included, happy, secure, nurtured and engaged in their learning. We want everyone to develop a love of learning and belief in themselves.



We promote four values at Murrayburn Primary School. Those are Honesty, Resilience, Respect and Kindness

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. Murrayburn Primary School supports every young person to achieve and attain their very best.

- We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals, respect individuality and celebrate diversity.
- We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination. We challenge inequality and promote inclusive, nurturing environments.
- We recognise the effects that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can have on a child or young person's feelings of worth, on their health and wellbeing and on their school-work.
- We provide opportunities for success through a variety of curricular and extra-curricular options and pathways.
- We encourage creativity and support our young people to build the skills and resilience they need for the future.
- We have the courage to aspire to the very best we can be. We belong to our school and we are very proud of our tradition and heritage.
- We use restorative approaches to repair and strengthen relationships between staff and pupils within our whole school community.

What do we mean by bullying?

"Bullying is an abuse of (assumed) power. People who are bullied are very upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Their own dignity or 'agency' has been diminished. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Cyber-bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or social media." (Council Policy)

"Bullying ... can make you feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. Something only needs to happen once for you to feel worried or scared to go to school or other places you enjoy going to. Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is doesn't mean it's not bullying" (Respectme)

Bullying behaviours can take many forms. Examples of bullying behaviours include:

- Verbal behaviour: e.g. name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening.
- Exclusionary behaviour: e.g. ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours.
- Physical behaviour: e.g. hitting, tripping, kicking.
- Taking and/or damaging belongings
- Online or cyber-bullying: e.g. sending an abusive text, email or instant message, or posting an abusive comment on a social networking site
- Targeting someone because of who they are or how they choose to identify (see 9 protected characteristics on following page). This is termed as 'discrimination.'

Bullying behaviour can often be rooted in prejudice and discrimination due to difference or a perceived difference. We are committed to challenging discrimination, prejudice-based bullying and language, and to fulfilling our duty under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination to any of the nine protected characteristics: **disability; race; sex (gender); pregnancy/maternity; religion/belief; sexual orientation; gender re-assignment; age; marriage/civil partnership** (in relation to the education of children and young people, the protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnership are acknowledged but not a focus)

NB: Murrayburn's procedures for promoting equality and diversity and preventing discrimination are expressed in a separate document but sit alongside this set of procedures

We recognise that children and young people can also experience bullying in relation to: **asylum seeker or refugee status; body image; being care experienced; social or economic status; young carer responsibilities; imprisonment of parents/carers, siblings, or other family members.**

We recognise that children and young people can experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination because of any of these individual factors or a combination of factors.

Hate incident or hate crime

A bullying incident is a hate incident if the victim or anyone else thinks it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. If the incident is a criminal offence and the offender targeted the victim because of their prejudice or hostility based on any of these characteristics, this is a hate crime. All hate crimes should be reported to Police Scotland through the School Link Officer. In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of staff / Equality Co-ordinator should seek advice from the School Link Officer.

Responsibilities and Reporting bullying, prejudice and discrimination incidents

Headteachers are:

- responsible for the introduction and implementation of this procedure. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents/carers are encouraged to play an active part in following the guidance and putting it into practice. Teachers and support staff are expected to be pro-active, to treat all allegations seriously and to refer reports of incidents to the Equalities Co-ordinator / designated member of the senior leadership team. The incident is recorded accurately with future actions detailed.

The Equalities Co-ordinator and Senior Management Team are required to:

- fully investigate any allegations of bullying behaviour
- ensure that all allegations are reported and recorded rigorously
- monitor SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module reports regularly (at least termly)
- monitor and report annually on the implementation of this procedure
- supervise the review and updating of this procedure at least every three years
- organise and supervise the school's Pupil Equality Group (who have a role in promoting anti-bullying procedures)

Pupils are asked to:

- report all incidents and suspected incidents of any type of bullying, discrimination or prejudice that they experience to a member of staff, where it is safe for them to do so
- report all incidents and suspected incidents of bullying, discrimination and prejudice that they see to a member of staff, where it is safe for them to do so
- support each other and to seek help from a member of staff, to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.
- if they don't feel able to speak to a member of staff, they can complete a slip that is put in a secure and centrally located box. This will be checked regularly (daily).

All school staff are required to:

- be pro-active in implementing this procedure
- treat all allegations and observation of bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour or language seriously
- seek to address incidents, where appropriate
- record all incidents of pupil conflict that are reported to them (either in jotter log or by using 'Microsoft OneNote') so that any patterns of behaviour from specific pupils can be identified and reported incidents can be tracked (each class to have individual log of reported incidents and SMT to keep log of incidents reported to them)
- inform the Equalities Co-ordinator and/or SMT of all incidents of discrimination and any behaviour which is suspected to be bullying as defined in this document

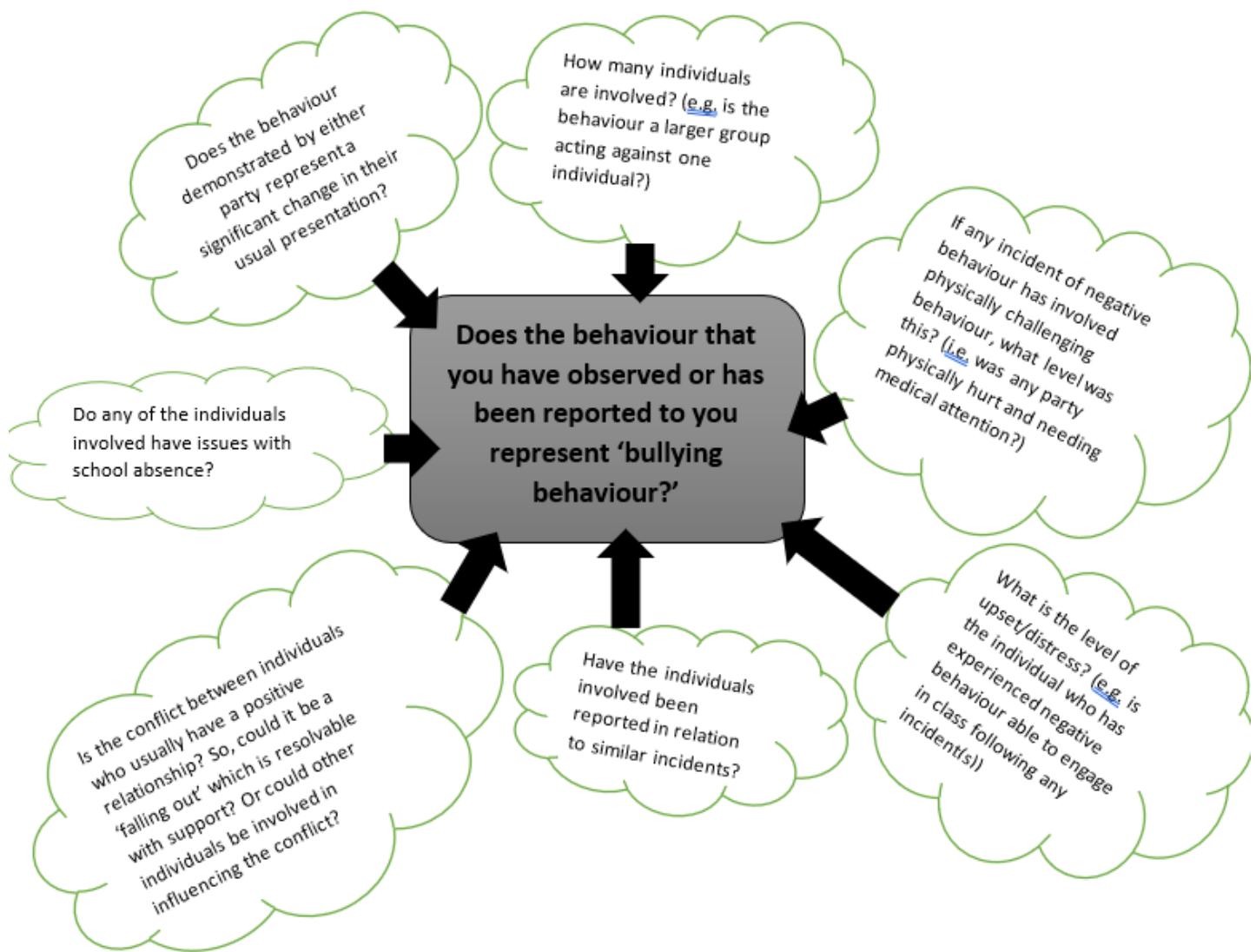
When should incidents be reported to the Senior Management Team/Equalities Co-ordinator?

There are not always absolute definitions of what elevates any one incident of conflict between pupils to be described as bullying (and therefore reportable to SMT). However, the two areas which should **always** be discussed with a member of the Senior Management Team are:

- Incidents which staff consider to be a ‘Welfare Concern’ under Child Protection procedures
- Incidents in which an individual who identifies with a protected characteristic has experienced discriminatory behaviour or language either directly or indirectly (reportable to The Equalities Co-ordinator)

In all other cases of conflict, staff must use their professional judgement to decide whether to report an incident or incidents to a member of the senior management team. As with child protection procedures, **if in doubt, ask.**

The ‘challenge questions’ below may also give some indicators as to whether an incident or incidences need to be discussed further with a member of the senior management team.



Parents/carers are asked to:

- be aware of respectme, Scotland's Anti-bullying Service booklet – Bullying Behaviour: A Guide for Parents and Carers ([available at http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/](http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/))
- work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying, discrimination and prejudice cannot thrive
- speak to any member of staff (the class teacher, guidance teacher or member of senior leadership team) if they have any concerns about bullying, discrimination and prejudice experienced by their child or by any other child/children at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter
- encourage their children to be positive members of our school community
- monitor closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet and to intervene if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately.
- understand that we seek to understand the experiences and address the needs of all children and young people who experience bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour as well as those who present bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour. We do this within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.
- speak to the Head Teacher if there are continued concerns following initial intervention
- be aware that they can contact a relevant external organisation for advice and support
- be aware of the school's complaints procedure and the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service and their rights regarding these procedures

Through the Curriculum for Excellence, we:

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities as responsible citizens.
- Challenge stereotypes, bias and discrimination, including prejudice-based attitudes and language
- Use opportunities to promote diversity and equality throughout the year and with reference to national and international awareness days and weeks e.g. Black History Week
- Provide age-appropriate reading materials and resources that positively reflect and represent diversity, e.g. family structures that include single parents, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, same-sex parents.
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals.
- Raise awareness about bullying and our Anti-Bullying Procedure across a range of school subjects.
- Promote resilience through the Building Resilience programme

PREVENTION

By promoting a positive school ethos, with a focus on rights, equalities and health and wellbeing, we hope to prevent bullying, prejudice and discrimination happening.

NB: Murrayburn's procedures for promoting equality and diversity are expressed in a separate document but sit alongside this set of procedures.

- We update displays and posters regularly and use them to remind pupils that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable and what to do if they or someone they know is being bullied or experiencing prejudice.
- Our Pupil Equalities Group actively supports the school's work on prevention of bullying, prejudice and discrimination.
- Bullying, prejudice and discrimination and other equality-related issues are a standing item on the SLT meetings, department meetings and our Pupil Parliament agenda.
- The school holds diversity and anti-bullying initiatives to raise the profile of these issues (e.g. an annual 'Diversity Week' in September)
- We work with other agencies and partners in health, police and the voluntary sector to promote a positive ethos. This includes working with organisations such as 'Show Racism the Red Card.'
- We have a successful buddy system to support transition from nursery to primary school and senior pupils support our youngest children by promoting positive friendships and relationships.
- Our staff receive regular training to increase their awareness and understanding of all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination as well as to develop skills in restorative practice.

SUPPORT

How we support pupils who are bullied or experience prejudice and discrimination

See also supplementary guidance on preventing and responding to incidents of prejudice and discrimination related to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. Part 1: Tackling Racist Incidents / Creating an Anti-Racist Culture.

We listen to the child or young person

- We reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling.
- We encourage them to talk about how they feel, find out what happened and who was involved.
- We involve them in making choices about how the matter could be resolved.
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We ask them to report any further incidents to us straight away.
- We affirm that the bullying can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does.
- We say clearly what will happen next and that we will update them on progress.
- When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check that bullying has not started again.

What happens next?

- At all times, child protection procedures and/or Risk Management procedures should be followed, if necessary.
- In most cases, further investigation will be done by the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator or Pupil Support Leader (secondary)
- Further investigation may involve:
 - Speaking with the children or young people involved, preserving confidentiality.
 - Speaking with children or young people or others who witnessed the incident, preserving confidentiality.
 - Speaking with parents (*after consultation with the child or young person*)
 - Seeking advice from partner services and relevant organisations
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime), the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will report this to Police Scotland.
- In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of the senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will seek advice from Police Scotland.
- If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has taken place, we will take appropriate and proportionate action (see examples of possible actions below)
- If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has not taken place, we will speak with the child or young person who reported the incident and offer further support if needed.
- At all times, we will update the child or young person who reported bullying, prejudice or discrimination.

Our work with pupils who bully others or present prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes / behaviour

A child or young person who is bullying someone else may not be doing this consciously but the impact of bullying, prejudice or discrimination is still felt and this is taken seriously. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or present prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes / behaviour will be treated fairly and consistently using actions that are proportionate and appropriate to the age and stage of the child and to the incident (see below).

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in the incident separately.
- We listen to their version of events and take time to discover the reasons for the behaviour.
- We talk to anyone who may have witnessed the incident.
- We reinforce the message that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop.
- We address prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes that may be behind the behaviour
- We seek a commitment to stop bullying.
- We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
- We consider consequences under our school's Positive Behaviour Management Procedure.
- We consider what support the pupil needs and whether other referrals are required, e.g. educational psychologist, counsellor.
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime) we report this to Police Scotland.
- In the case of hate incidents, we seek advice from Police Scotland.
- We advise pupils responsible for bullying, prejudice or discrimination that we check to ensure that the behaviour stops.
- We contact the parents of the pupil(s) at an early stage.
- We follow up after incidents to check that the bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour has not started again in any form.

Some examples of our actions

- Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances.
- Involvement of a parent/carer where appropriate.
- Peer mentoring and mediation.
- De-escalation strategies.
- Physical separation of person/people presenting bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour, where necessary and possible.
- Use of support base to increase confidence and provide support.
- Consequences, including loss of privileges.
- Assessment of additional support needs, including counselling, for the person being bullied or experiencing prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour or for the person who is bullying or displaying prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour.
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector.
- Referral to specific support service, such as Psychological Services, Education Welfare Service, Social Work or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Note: Exclusion from school is not itself a sanction or punishment for bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour and would only be used in specific circumstances and as a last resort.

Online bullying and bullying outside the school premises

We know that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The behaviour may be presented by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent informs us of bullying, prejudice or discrimination out with the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle these incidents outside of school.
- Talk to the Head Teacher of any other school(s) whose pupils are allegedly presenting bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour.
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses
- Talk to the police, if appropriate.

Follow-up

When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check with the child or young person that bullying has not started again.

RECORDING AND MONITORING BULLYING INCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF DISCRIMINATION

The designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will record all incidents in the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMiS.

The following information is recorded:

- the person experiencing the behaviour
- the person displaying the behaviour
- the nature and category of the incident
- the perceived reason(s) for bullying
- actions already taken and future actions
- conclusion (being addressed, resolved, not resolved, unfounded)

All incidents should be recorded. Records should include whether the incident is bullying, and/or prejudice-based and the nature of this. If there is any dispute or doubt (on the part of any individual) about whether the incident was or was not bullying or prejudice, the incident and the doubts should be recorded.

The Equalities Co-ordinator will:

- ensure that this procedure is implemented.
- monitor SEEMiS reports on regular basis, at least termly.

Records of bullying, discrimination and prejudice-based incidents will be collected centrally from SEEMiS by the local authority from August 2020 on a termly basis.

COMMUNICATING THIS PROCEDURE

We promote our anti-bullying procedure throughout the session. This procedure is on the school website. Posters are on display around the school advising pupils how they can report bullying, discrimination and prejudice, or seek confidential help. An online form is available for anonymous reporting and is shared and promoted regularly via the fortnightly school newsletter. The procedure is also reinforced through PSE classes and assemblies.

CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK

We recognise that there may be times when pupils or parents/carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying, discrimination and prejudice or a wider community issue. If a pupil or parent/carer feels that an incident/issue has not been fully resolved to their satisfaction, we ask them to contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents/carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then parents/carers can use the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service. We are also pleased to receive positive feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well.

At any time, a pupil or parent/carer can seek advice and support from an external organisation.

EVALUATING AND REVIEWING OUR PROCEDURE

We evaluate the effectiveness of this procedure on an annual basis, reviewing the number of incidents that are reported alongside the attendance, exclusions, attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups. Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying are reviewed through questionnaires, focus groups and the City of Edinburgh Council P3-P7 pupil wellbeing questionnaire. Feedback received from parents is also taken into consideration. The procedure is reviewed formally every 3 years.