

Promoting Positive Relationships in Falkirk's Educational Establishments

(Anti-Bullying Policy)

*“Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of ‘agency’. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online”
respectme, 2015*



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1. Statement

All children and young people have the right to be protected from intimidation and the fear of bullying behaviour in any of its forms.

Bullying behaviour, of any kind, impacts on children and young people's wellbeing and effects their attainment, inclusion and participation.

Bullying should never be seen as a normal part of growing up. Falkirk Council promotes positive relationships and embeds the values of Fairness, Respect, Equality and Inclusion in all our Early Learning and Childcare Centres (ELCC) and schools. By establishing a positive ethos and culture, all of Falkirk's Children and Young People can flourish and achieve the best possible outcomes.

This policy reflects the Legal Framework which underpins Education in Scotland.

Legal Framework

- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)
- [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People \(2017\)](#)
- [Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
- [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland \(2014\)](#)
- [Curriculum for Excellence and the continued focus on the Health & Wellbeing agenda](#)
- [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)
- [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act \(2014\)](#)
- [Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)

2. This Policy and Framework will:

- Promote positive relationships
- Help prevent bullying behaviour
- Implement a consistent approach to dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour
- Address six strategic actions over the next three years



3. Our ELCCs and Schools will:

- Create and maintain an open, positive and supportive environment for children and young people.
- Listen to all so that they feel safe, secure and able to discuss sensitive issues.
- Model behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and builds resilience.
- Understand [Getting it Right for Every Child](#) and our duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#).



So that...

- ELCCs and Schools will have a positive, equality and respect-based ethos encouraging inclusion of all children and young people.
- Positive relationships between pupils, staff and parents/carers.
- Confident, included and resilient children and young people capable of achieving better outcomes.
- All staff will be confident and responsible for implementing a positive ethos and culture in their ELCC or school.
- Increased parental awareness, understanding and engagement in the approaches used by their child's ELCC or school.

4. What is Bullying?

Bullying behaviour can harm people in different ways. It can cause physical, emotional and/or psychological harm and although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat and fear may remain over time.

- 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 phone
- 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

Sometimes there can be attempts at bullying which have no clear or profound impact or effect. This happens when a person attempts to bully another individual using a variety of means but with no effect. Although this does not constitute bullying, the behaviour should be challenged. Bullying behaviour or attempts at bullying should never be ignored and only through challenging these types of behaviour through a restorative approach will a positive ethos, culture and relationships be achieved and maintained.

5. Prejudiced-based bullying

Under the Equality Act 2010, Falkirk Council have an important responsibility to ensure that no one: pupils, staff or visitors, are discriminated against, victimised or harassed for any of the protected characteristics listed in the legislation.



Protected characteristics

Equality Act 2010

- Age*
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

***NB: Age does not apply to school pupils, but does apply to parents, visitors and staff.**

Prejudiced-based bullying is not solely directed at those with a protected characteristic. It may also be directed at individuals who are perceived to have or are associated with another individual with a protected characteristic. Therefore, it is important that our schools include consideration of all protected characteristics across learning to ensure children and young people have the understanding and confidence to respond to incidents of prejudiced-based bullying effectively.

There are other types of bullying behaviour that are prejudiced-based but not listed as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. When these behaviours are exhibited Falkirk Council have a responsibility to address this to ensure no: pupils, staff or visitors, are discriminated against, victimised or harassed for any of these additional characteristics. More detailed information on this is available from [RespectMe](#).

6. Online Bullying

It is crucial that a consistent approach is taken to all forms of bullying. Online bullying should not be treated any differently than face-to-face bullying. Schools will make sure pupils understand that unacceptable behaviour remains unacceptable whether online or face-to-face and that pupils are responsible for their behaviour online.

Where online bullying occurs during the school day, ELCCs and schools should adopt a restorative and proportionate response to the behaviour involving all relevant individuals in the process.



Where online bullying occurs outwith school (e.g. at home, in the community), schools will work in partnership with children and young people and their parents/carers in order to prevent the bullying.

There is a parental responsibility to monitor their child or young person's online behaviour and it should not be assumed that the sole responsibility for dealing with online bullying outside of school rests with the school.

ELCCs and schools will refer parents/carers to support helplines/websites where necessary.

7. Restorative approaches

Why restorative approaches?

It is common for many people to prefer a form of punishment for children and young people exhibiting bullying behaviour. However, this more traditional approach can be ineffective, dangerous and breed resentment. It can also worsen the situation for all concerned as the child or young person may become resentful at the punishment; as opposed to reflecting on their actions and their impact.

Benefits of restorative approaches

- Embeds values which separate the person from the behaviour
- Promotes accountability
- Attempts to resolve the harm caused due to the behaviour
- Help create positive, forward-thinking environments
- Help children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- More effective than traditional forms of punishment

What are restorative approaches?

Falkirk's ELCCs and schools use restorative approaches as part of a planned response to bullying behaviour. Restorative approaches are based on a set of questions that help children and young people think about their behaviour and understand how they can correct it. These approaches positively alter a school environment and their effective use should help to establish positive relationships within schools.

Restorative approaches can include the use of a 'restorative conversation'. This can take place during the school day and the use of restorative language and questions helps to enable children and young people to understand the impact of their behaviours – both on themselves and others.

Any parent/carer wishing to find out more about what type of restorative approach is used within their child's school, should contact the school directly.

The use of restorative approaches does not mean there are no consequences for children and young people exhibiting bullying behaviour. ELCCs and schools may use a mix of restorative approaches as well as sanctions.

8. Recording and monitoring

All instances of bullying must be recorded by ELCCs and schools. Recording instances of bullying is an integral part of the approach adopted by Falkirk Council in preventing and managing bullying behaviour.

All ELCCs and schools will have a consistent approach to recording and monitoring instances of bullying behaviour. This will enable ELCCs, schools and Children's Services to identify any trends or specific issues which exist.

All instances of prejudiced-based bullying that fall under any of the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010 must be recorded and monitored. As per [Falkirk Council's Poverty Strategy](#), bullying behaviour based on an individual's socio-economic background must also be challenged, recorded and monitored by schools.

Benefits:

- Provides valuable information on the scope and scale of the bullying
- Helps identify trends, patterns and specific issues
- Helps inform approaches to preventing and managing bullying behaviour
- Can identify any improvements that are required in our approach

What we will consider when recording bullying incident:

- What was the behaviour?
- What is the impact on the school, learning or health and wellbeing?
- What does the child/young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do?
- Is there evidence of any prejudiced-based attitudes or behaviour?

9. What ELCCs and Schools will do

The list below contains strategies and responses which, depending on the context of the bullying behaviour, children and young people and parents/carers may expect schools to adopt.

- Pupils experiencing bullying behaviour will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who exhibit bullying behaviour will be dealt with fairly and consistently.
- Previous instances of bullying behaviour involving either the individual experiencing the behaviour or the individual exhibiting the behaviour, will be taken into account.
- ELCCs and schools may use de-escalation strategies using restorative approaches
- There may be physical separation of the individuals involved where necessary and where possible (the views of the pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour will be taken into account)
- The use of a restorative meeting
- Parents/carers will be informed and involved in response to the bullying behaviour
- The use of formal sanctions may be deemed necessary.

Where a criminal offence has occurred, the incident should be reported to Police Scotland. Schools may seek advice from the School Based Police Officer where this is the case. If this has occurred on school grounds or during the school day, a School Incident Report form must be completed and forwarded to Children's Services Senior Leadership Team.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS 2018 - 2021

2018

November 2018

- Launch the policy.
- RespectMe training for staff.
- Launch online resources for schools/pupils.

2019

May – August 2019

- Review the recording of bullying behaviour.
- Review recorded incidents of prejudiced-based bullying behaviour.
- Review bullying-related complaints.

2020

May – August 2020

- Review the recording of bullying behaviour.
- Review recorded incidents of prejudiced-based bullying behaviour.
- Review bullying-related complaints.

2021

May 2021

- Begin the review of this policy and framework.

September 2021

- Launch public consultation on the strengths of our approaches and areas for further improvement.
- School consultations with pupils and parents on the strengths of our approaches and areas for further improvement.

Helpful websites and resources

respectme - Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service.

www.respectme.org.uk

ChildLine - website has a section on bullying for young people and adults.

www.childline.org.uk

Childnet International - works in partnership with other organisations to help make the internet a safe place for children and young people.

www.childnet.com

CEOP – The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre website provides information and advice for online safety.

www.ceop.police.uk

LGBT Youth Scotland

www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

Parentzone

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Kids Health

<https://kidshealth.org/>

Coalition for Children

<https://safechild.org/>

Scottish Family Information Service

<http://www.scottishfamilies.gov.uk/>

Children 1st

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/>