



Anti-Bullying Policy

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

Beath High School works with children, young people and families as part of its activities. These include but are not limited to: providing education, opportunities for personal growth, referring on to partner agencies where appropriate, reviewing support plans and ensuring that children and young people are supported to fulfil their potential.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people, and bullying directed towards adults – whether visitors or employees – within the school environment
- to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Beath High School, including the Senior Leadership Team, teaching staff, supply workers, agencies connected to Beath High School and student teachers.

Separate documents set out:

- our code of behaviour for children, young people and adults
- our policies and procedures for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment that takes place between adults employed by or connected to Fife Council.

What is bullying?

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- takes place in person or online.

More detailed information about bullying is available from NSPCC Learning:
learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying





Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in Scotland. The NSPCC provides summaries of the key legislation and guidance on:

- bullying - learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying
- Equality Act (2010) - [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)
- online abuse - learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse
- child protection - learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them
- employees and visitors have the right to experience the school environment without being the target of abuse.

We are aware that:

There may be additional barriers to accessing support for people who identify as having a protected characteristic. These are outlined in the Equality Act (2010). These protected characteristics are enshrined in law:

- Age
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership status

We will undertake to ensure that people who identify with a protected characteristic are from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation within our school community. For more detailed information about Protected Characteristics and prejudice-based bullying, please see appendix.

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We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of protected characteristics or connections to others with protected characteristics have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- children with other characteristics also need protection from harm, including those who may be highlighted as a result of:
 - having additional support needs
 - their body image or physical appearance
 - children from single parent families or whose parents are separated
 - children with same sex parents
 - children with transgender parents
 - those belonging to gypsy/traveller families
 - intersectionality
 - being looked after, care experienced or in kinship care
 - sectarianism
 - socio-economic difficulties
 - being a young carer.
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone at Beath High School is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
- holding regular discussions with staff, children, young people and families connected to Beath High School about bullying and how to prevent it.

These discussions will focus on:

- The responsibility of everyone at Beath High School to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
- practising skills such as listening to each other
- respecting the fact that we are all different

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- making sure that no one is without friends
 - dealing with problems in a positive way
 - checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well
- providing support and training for all staff on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic, bi-phobic, transphobic and sexual bullying
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- making sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:
 - the needs of the person being bullied
 - the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
 - needs of any bystanders
 - Beath High School as a whole.
- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.

We will be proactive about:

- seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
- increasing diversity within our staff, children and young people
- welcoming new people to Beath High School.

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside Fife Council policies and procedures including:

- Child protection/safeguarding policy statement.
- Procedures for responding to concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing.
- Anti-bullying information for pupils exhibiting bullying behaviour.
- Anti-bullying guidelines for staff.
- Managing allegations against staff.
- Code of conduct for staff.
- Equality and diversity policies.

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Contact details

Nominated anti-bullying single point of contact:

Name: Mrs Helen Bradley-Laing, Principal Teacher of Guidance

Phone/email: 01383 602401 / enquiries@beathhs.gov.uk

Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection:

Name: Mr Gordon Hunter, Depute Rector

Phone/email: 01383 602401 / enquiries@beathhs.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline:

0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.
This policy was last reviewed on: 7th January 2024.

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Appendix – Prejudice-Based Bullying

This section outlines the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 as well as other characteristics which may lead to bullying that are not covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Additional Support Needs: These can arise for any reason and be of short or long-term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors, and therefore may relate to a protected characteristic. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

Age: Age is a protected characteristic although prejudice and discrimination based on age is not applicable in school settings, it can affect children and young people in a variety of other settings. For example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and, given that race is a protected characteristic, understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

Body Image and Physical Appearance: This can be hugely important to children and young people with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact on their wellbeing. In some cases, body image and physical appearance may relate to a protected characteristic, such as race or disability.

Disability: Disability is a Protected Characteristic. People who bully others may see disabled children and young people as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The language and behaviour used may be a result of a lack of understanding about the nature of a person's disability. Increased knowledge and understanding about disability and the impact it can have can help reduce bullying.

Gender Identity and Transphobic Bullying: The term 'transgender' is an umbrella term for those whose gender identity or expression differs in some way from the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, neither or aspects of both. Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic.

Transgender people face significant societal prejudice largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways including transphobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying if someone is perceived to be transgender or someone they are associate with,





is transgender, i.e a parent, relative or other significant figure. The term 'gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 and refers to those who propose to go through, are going through, or have gone through a process of gender re-assignment.

Gypsy/Travellers: Children and young people who are Gypsy/Travellers may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Perceived risks about bullying and given that race is a protected characteristic parents' own experiences of discriminatory behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller families, such as Roma, may have similar concerns.

Sexual Orientation, Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying: Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010. Bullying based on sexual orientation is largely motivated by prejudice towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Homophobic bullying is when a young person's actual or perceived sexual orientation is used to exclude, threaten, hurt, or humiliate them. Any young person can be homophobicly bullied, whether they are LGBT or not.

Sometimes young people can be homophobicly bullied because others think that they are LGBT, because they have LGBT family or friends or often because they are seen as different or not conforming to traditional gender stereotypes. Transgender children and young people can therefore also experience homophobic bullying.

Homophobic language and jokes around the school can create a climate of homophobia; for example, the use of the word 'gay' to mean sub-standard or uncool. This type of language should therefore be addressed.

Intersectionality: Understanding the different and unequal social and economic outcomes for particular groups, based on intersections between race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age. In the context of anti-bullying, it is important to understand the connection between the experience of belonging to one or more of these groups and a resultant inequality in attainment and wellbeing.

Looked After Children and Young People: Looked after children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. Children can face bullying behaviour simply because they are looked after and seen in some way as 'different'. Children who are looked after away from home can also experience bullying behaviour in their residential care home, at school and in their community. Looked after children and young people may not always have a stable support network to turn to when experiencing bullying. For some children forming positive relationships with peers and adults can be more difficult due to their early childhood adversity. Developing trusting and supportive relationships between children and practitioners is required to address bullying of all forms and in all settings.

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Marriage/Civil Partnership: Marriage and civil partnership is a protected characteristic. Whilst it is unlikely that a school-aged pupil will be in a same sex marriage or civil partnership and directly experience prejudice and discrimination as a result, there could be instances of indirect discrimination, for example, if the child or young person is associated with someone (parent, sibling, etc.) who is in a same sex marriage or civil partnership or in a same sex relationship. Marriage and civil partnership discrimination and prejudice can also affect children and young people in a variety of other settings, for example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

Racism and Race: Race is a protected characteristic. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture as well as their skin colour and accent. The status of the ethnic group a child belongs to (or people assume they belong to) in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they are less valued and 'deserve' to be treated differently, or with less respect.

Religion or Belief: Religion or belief is a protected characteristic. Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths 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 lead to bullying. People who have a religion or belief as well as those who do not, are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Sectarianism: Most people understandably associate sectarianism with religion, which is a protected characteristic. 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 for sectarian abuse – whatever your beliefs may be. In Scotland, sectarianism is most often related to Protestant and Roman Catholic divisions within Christianity but can also relate to other religions, for example Sunni and Shia Muslims within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform Jews within Judaism.

Sexism and Gender: Sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are all protected characteristics. Bullying in the form of derogatory language 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. These terms can be of an explicit sexual nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards a person's masculinity or femininity. Sexism and gender stereotypes feed into homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Gender stereotyping, based on the notion of acceptable and unacceptable male and female behaviour, can leave children and young people who are perceived not to conform to these notions vulnerable to indirect and direct bullying.





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Personality traits that do not fit into the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can lead to bullying because of the prejudice towards their perceived difference.

Socio-economic Prejudice: Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived 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, accents, belongings, clothing, etc can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant socio-economic group. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent.

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 fully participate 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.

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