

Bankhead Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures

Introduction

South Lanarkshire Council is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments. At Bankhead Primary School our agreed school motto is **Bankhead Will SOAR**. This reflects our four key values – **S**uccess, **O**ppportunity, **A**ctive and **R**espect. Our vision is: *Working and learning in partnership to ensure all our children are safe, included and reaching their potential*. We understand that bullying is never acceptable and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment.

Our school policy and procedures reflect advice given in national and local anti-bullying policies:

- Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People – Scottish Government 2017
- Treat Me Well – Anti-Bullying Guidance – South Lanarkshire Council 2018

It also draws on advice from “respectme” – Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service.

Definition

In Scotland, bullying is defined as:

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).

It can include behaviours such as: name calling, teasing, being hit, having belongings taken or damaged, being ignored or left out, receiving abusive texts or messages on social media, spreading rumours, being targeted for who you are or are perceived to be.

Online bullying or bullying through social media platforms is just as serious as face to face bullying. At Bankhead we appreciate that bullying that happens outside of school can have an impact on children within school.

Children's Rights

Bankhead Primary follows the conventions laid out by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Bullying is a breach of those rights. As a school we believe any bullying related to the protected characteristics laid out in the Equality Act 2010 is unacceptable. These characteristics include: Disability, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation. (More details on the protected characteristics can be found in the Scottish Government's Respect for All document).

Expectations / Responsibilities for all

At Bankhead we believe that it is everyone's duty to ensure bullying does not happen. Staff, visitors and parents / carers all have a big role to play in setting standards of behaviour and interaction. We expect all adults to show respect to other adults and children and to model respectful relationships for the children. We expect our children to treat each other with respect in all aspects of school life and to set high standards of behaviour at all times. Respect for All is at the core of all we do in Bankhead. We believe that encouraging and developing respectful relationships will reduce incidences of bullying behaviour. Staff will challenge prejudice based language and behaviour and role model appropriate responses and support.

Strategies used to prevent and respond to bullying

We take a pro-active approach in Bankhead Primary to try and prevent bullying incidents happening in the first place. We work to raise the profile of our anti-bullying approach in school amongst the whole school community. We reinforce the message that bullying is never acceptable through classwork, at assemblies and during our anti-bullying week. Our staff are trained in anti-bullying approaches and our methodologies and procedures are shared with parents. All families are issued with the information booklet "Bullying... A guide for parents and carers" (respectme 2016). This is to help ensure the whole Bankhead community has a shared approach to tackling bullying behaviour.

We foster a positive school ethos through our behavioural reward systems which encourage positive behaviour and relationships. We have buddies, play-leaders and playground supervisors who all look to develop respectful relationships. We have Peer Mediators in the playground to try and settle any disputes before they become a bigger problem. We look to develop clear lines of communication between home and school so that any issues can be quickly addressed. We enlist the support of partner agencies such as Behaviour Support Teacher, Educational Psychologist and School Nurse.

We take all incidents of suspected bullying behaviour seriously. We aim to deal with all bullying incidents sensitively, quickly and effectively. Incidents will be investigated by a member of the Senior Management Team. If it is deemed to have included bullying behaviour, parents / carers of the children involved will be informed. We work in partnership with families to resolve any issues. We use restorative practices and solution focussed approaches to help us resolve any bullying issues within the school. We will offer support to all involved in bullying incidents to try to ensure it doesn't happen again. An action plan may be put in place to help with this.

Recording and Monitoring

In line with South Lanarkshire's Education Resources policy on Inclusion and Equality, bullying incidents are recorded on the school's computer system and held centrally by the council. This allows the school and authority to monitor, analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's policy and procedures.

Consultation

We consult the wider Bankhead community to garner views on a variety of issues, including anti-bullying. The views of children, parents / carers and staff help us to evaluate and refine our policy and procedures in relation to anti-bullying. Some parents indicated that they are unsure of what is bullying and what is not bullying. Some also indicated that they were unsure of the steps the school would take to deal with bullying incidents. The school works to raise awareness and understanding amongst all parents / carers about these issues.

Parent / carers told us:

"...early intervention and communication with parents is crucial".

“...pupils should have a clear understanding of how it is being dealt with”.

“...parents need to play a big part in stopping it”.

Our children told us;

“...more adults in the playground could help stop bullying”.

“... children who have been bullying should get help too”.

“...parents / carers could talk to their children about how to prevent it”.

The views of the children and parents / carers have been very helpful in guiding the direction of our policy and procedures.

Review

Though we will regularly evaluate aspects of our policy and procedures, we will undertake a full review of our anti-bullying policy every three years.

Conclusion

Our ultimate aim is to make Bankhead a “bullying free zone”. To do this we need to work in partnership with the wider school community to develop respectful relationships and re-inforce our belief that bullying is never acceptable.

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