

# Keithhall School



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

## Rationale

All children and young people have the right to learn in an environment that is free from bullying in order for all children to fully develop the skills and confidence needed for life, work and for learning. This policy gives clarity for all stakeholders in the definition of what bullying is and how it is dealt with at Keithhall in accordance with government and local policy. Bullying is considered to be a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in any form is unacceptable. This policy aims to:

- raise awareness and understanding of the impact(s) of bullying behaviour.
- reinforce that bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- ensure that everyone is treated equally.
- respond to incidents of bullying in a consistent and effective way.
- create comfortable and safe learning environments for pupils.

This policy has been informed by, Respect for All: A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017) ; Bullying Prevention and Management for educational Establishments (2022) Aberdeenshire Council, and has been shaped by the National 'Getting It Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) framework.

In accordance with Scotland's National Anti-Bullying Service; 'Respect Me', Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services define bullying as the following:

*'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.'*

Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017)

A further exemplification of bullying from the same document states that bullying behaviour: *'can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.'*

Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017)

Aberdeenshire Council shares the view that: *'Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly. Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up.'*

Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017)

This anti-bullying policy reflects six key areas in providing an appropriate and robust approach to the prevention and management of bullying. These are:

- **Stance** – Bullying in any form is unacceptable
- **Definition** -Bullying can be verbal, physical, emotional and cyber. It can be persistent or one off
- **Prevention** - Work to educate and raise awareness
- **Communication** - Communicating efforts to prevent and respond to incidents
- **Response** – adopt the ‘6 step approach’
- **Reporting and Monitoring** – The Bullying & Equalities (B&E) module within SEEMIS Click+Go is used to record incidents of bullying in schools

The Equality Act 2010 protects us all. Every person has one or more of the 9 defined protected characteristics. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation and Marriage and civil partnership.

### **Prevention**

Parents/Carers, pupils and Aberdeenshire Council Education staff have a responsibility to work collaboratively to maintain a high standard of behaviour and ensure an environment free from bullying behaviour. Everyone should be treated equally and with respect.

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) recognises that the all children are at the centre of any decision making and support available to them. It is based on an understanding of the wellbeing of a child in their current situation but also considers any wider influences on a child or young person. When considering wellbeing, it ensures that the right support is offered based on individual developmental needs. GIRFEC aims to ensure needs are identified as early as possible to avoid bigger concerns or problems developing. It requires a co-ordinated approach involving pupils, Parents/Carers and staff to best meet the specific needs and improve wellbeing.

To prevent bullying behaviour at Keithhall we; we work to raise awareness amongst pupils, staff and Parents/Carers. At Keithhall we:

- encourage positive supportive relationships.
- have restorative conversations that encourage children to discuss how they feel when they fall out and help them develop mindfulness and resilience to help manage their relationships.
- inform Parents/Carers about the dangers of online and mobile technology. We offer advice on how measures can be implemented at home to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.
- ensure that pupils, Parents/Carers and staff are aware of support available beyond school (e.g. Childline, Samaritans, Police Scotland, Parentline).
- plan our curriculum to inform children and young people on diversity and inclusion and the importance of respect and kindness.
- access training opportunities to build confidence and capacity to respond to bullying.
- understand that all behaviours are a form of communication.
- share Anti-bullying updates with all staff and policies are updated with any relevant changes.
- access training in universal nurture and restorative approaches.

## **Communication**

We ensure that communication is at the heart of prevention strategies and responses to incidents of bullying behaviour by:

- sharing our anti-bullying policy with Parents/Carers through the school website.
- giving targeted lessons to increase knowledge and understanding of bullying.
- working to raise awareness of what bullying is during whole school assemblies.
- identifying individual needs early on and ensuring these are met through ongoing communication and the use of timescales to define actions.
- investigating incidents of bullying behaviour and communicating this to Parents / Carers as appropriate.
- communicating to Parents/Carers any support identified.
- working with Parents / Carers to address the holistic needs of the child consistent with the GIRFEC principles in response to an incident of bullying.
- arranging for regular contact between key staff and pupils involved in the immediate days and weeks following an incident.
- building relationships and identifying any further ongoing difficulties.
- ensuring all stakeholders are engaged with the consultation process to ensure the policy meets the needs of all pupils.

## **Response**

In all instances of bullying we use the 6 step approach:

1. Record all incidents of bullying using the Bullying and Equalities (B&E) Module within SEEMIS Click and Go
2. Speak to the individuals involved
3. Speak to Parents / Carers
4. Utilise Restorative approaches
5. Monitor the situation
6. Review and increase response accordingly

### **Restorative Practice**

Restorative approaches aim to restore and maintain good relationships where there has been conflict and harm. It helps pupils face up to any distress they have caused and think about how they can repair that harm. Importantly it gives pupils who have been harmed the chance to share their experience, which is sometimes what is needed to emotionally move on from a situation where they have felt wronged.

## **Taking Action**

The actions set out below are considered when dealing with a bullying behaviour concern.

- The language 'victim' and 'bully' is avoided as this labels those involved in bullying incidents and can be unhelpful. Labelling an action as bullying is a more effective way of motivating a child to change their bullying behaviour.
- Taking action to resolve a bullying situation must be given high priority.
- Pupils and Parents/Carers are aware of and included in communication strategies used by the school.
- A visual 'step by step' guide is used to highlight the process of addressing and resolving a bullying incident to Parents/Carers, pupils and teachers.
- Each situation may require a different response. A risk assessment can be done through speaking to pupils involved, and their Parents/Carers as is appropriate.
- Consideration is given as to whether a school devised plan of support is required for any individual involved in the incident.
- Communication with the pupil who has displayed the bullying behaviour is frank and honest and in accordance with the guidance on: Nurture, Restorative Approaches and Solution- Oriented Practice.
- Ongoing support to Parents/Carers and pupils involved in bullying behaviour will come from effective, honest and regular communication and a shared understanding of the steps that are being and have been taken to address identified issues in line with this policy.
- Staff adhere to the Seemis Guidance: Bullying and Equalities: Recording and Monitoring Bullying Incidents in Schools (RAMBIS) (internal document) in order to record the details of all incidents of bullying.
- Education staff in partnership with Parents / Carers monitor how relationships develop over the weeks and months that follow an incident of bullying behaviour.
- Repeat displays of bullying behaviour are followed up with an immediate response building on what has already been done (which will be recorded in the Bullying and Equalities (B&E) Module within SEEMIS Click and Go). Appropriate responses are decided on a case by case basis, taking account of factors relevant to each person involved, and the mental/emotional and physical wellbeing of pupils involved.

## **Reporting and Monitoring**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- All staff are aware of their role in implementing 'Aberdeenshire's Anti Bullying Policy: Bullying Prevention and Management for Educational Establishments 2022' to ensure effective implementation.
- Anti-bullying is incorporated within the strategic remit of the Head Teacher. However, in accordance with GIRFEC the wellbeing of pupils is the responsibility of all.
- Pupils need to report any instances of bullying they are aware of. Options for sharing this information will be identified by the Head Teacher.
- Keithhall school will record the number of bullying incidents centrally using The Bullying and Equalities (B&E) Module within SEEMIS Click and Go. Any recording of incidents must include specific detail e.g., in the instance of transphobic bullying, specifically detail the transphobic elements.
- Pupils, Parents/Carers and all Education staff are aware of the mobile phone/device policy of the school and adhere the Aberdeenshire ICT Responsible User Agreement that all pupils and staff are required to complete.

The responsibility for monitoring the day to day working of this policy lies with the Head Teacher.

Consultation on this policy as a draft was with Keithhall staff and Keithhall Parent Council.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Date of Policy May 2023