

Tackling bullying

in Renfrewshire



Renfrewshire
Council



Foreword

Every person has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from victimisation and fear. Bullying must always be taken seriously.

Respecting the rights of the individual is enshrined in legislation and is fundamental to the values and aspirations in Renfrewshire Council and of education and leisure services.

At national level, there has been considerable concern in recent years about the subject of bullying. Since this is an issue which can affect people at varying stages of their lives, all organisations are expected to have an anti-bullying policy, which is known to all. Within schools this will include staff, parents and pupils and will recognise the threat which bullying represents to the education and well-being of many pupils. There is clear evidence that bullying continues to be prevalent and a major cause of distress for young people.

Childline, the national charity for children in need, reported in 2007/08 that 21% of its calls were from children suffering from bullying, the largest percentage attributed to any one cause. In response to concerns from schools and parents across the country, the Scottish Executive in 1999 established an anti-bullying network.

Much good practice has been established and developed over the years within Renfrewshire schools and has been acknowledged at national level. This good practice has informed this reviewed policy. I am confident that the policy will support all schools to review their current procedures and further strengthen that practice. In this way, an ethos of respect for self and others will continue to be promoted and nurtured.

John Rooney

Director of Education and Leisure Services.

1 Introduction and rationale

- 1.1 The vision for Scotland's Children is that all children should be: confident individuals; effective contributors; successful learners; and responsible citizens. In order for these outcomes to be achieved, children should be: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected and responsible; and included.
- 1.2 This policy is an update of the anti-bullying policy, Tackling Bullying in Renfrewshire, which was one outcome of a working group set up in 2002 to review the existing strategy on social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and to consider the full range of issues related to behaviour and school ethos raised in the 2001 report of the Scottish Executive Discipline Task Force. The policy was launched in September 2003 at an event for pupils and staff of Renfrewshire schools. This was followed by a series of parent information events.
- 1.3 The revised policy includes specific reference to equality and discrimination based bullying, and the use of mobile phones, social networking websites, email and internet messaging in bullying. While retaining its major focus on schools, the policy also refers to the role of the partners who make up Renfrewshire's Children's Services Partnership. Partners include: Renfrewshire Council; NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde; Strathclyde Police; Strathclyde Fire and Rescue; Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration; and the voluntary sector.
- 1.4 Staff, pupils and parents all have a duty in relation to bullying, and expectations in this regard are indicated in:
- the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child;
 - the Human Rights Act 1998;
 - the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. (Scotland) Act 2000;
 - protecting children and young people: the Charter 2003;
 - equalities legislation, regulations and guidance; and
 - National Agreement on Teachers' Salaries and Conditions of Service 2001.
- More detailed information is provided in appendix 1.
- 1.5 The Scottish Government as part of its drive to achieve the national outcomes for children and young people, and enable them to achieve their potential, has published a series of strategic reports about children's well-being;
- Getting it right for every child:
 - Curriculum for Excellence;
 - Early Years Framework; and
 - Better Health, Better Care.
- 1.6 Review of the policy included a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives of education and leisure services, establishments, partner agencies, parents, representatives of teachers unions and respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying organisation.

2 Policy framework

- 2.1 In schools, the headteacher is responsible for involving the whole school community, including staff, pupils and parents in developing anti-bullying strategies and in understanding what bullying is and is not. It is also the headteacher's role to engage partners, including health services, social work and the police, in implementing these strategies.
- 2.2 The curriculum should address issues of discrimination and equality. The ethos of the school, and of service providers, should be based on respect and valuing difference, should develop awareness and understanding through giving positive messages to staff, pupils, parents and the local community to ensure young people feel safe and confident to report bullying. Establishments and services are expected to ensure that all people are welcome, are treated with respect, and that they feel safe in all parts of the building.
- 2.3 Improvement in behaviour cannot be achieved by simply drawing up a policy since the groundwork for such improvement lies in:
- developing an understanding of the shared values within which the school and services operate;
 - the quality of learning and teaching which takes place;
 - effective school management recognising the necessity for the development of good relationships; and
 - positive partnership working.
- 2.4 It is important that bullying in schools is seen not as a separate issue but as one aspect of unacceptable behaviour which impinges directly on the educational well-being of all involved. Any strategies for addressing bullying should be seen as part of an overall approach to supporting all children and young people. It should be recognised that bullying which occurs in the community or in cyber space can also have an effect on pupil well-being and that all partners concerned with child protection have a part to play in tackling bullying.
- 2.5 Anti-bullying strategies should be part of a school's overall policy on discipline. The main purpose behind any policy on managing pupil behaviour is to create an ethos where staff and children can learn in a safe supportive environment in a climate of mutual trust and respect.
- 2.6 Consultation was undertaken with the key stakeholders identified in 1.6 including staff, parents, pupils and young people. It will be important to discuss the revised policy with children and young people and to consult them on its implementation which will build on established good practice which has been developed in schools and other settings.

3 Establishment/service arrangements

The aims of the policy

- 3.1 This policy statement provides guidance to schools. The procedures to be followed are based on existing good practice and draw on current educational research and established staff development materials.
- 3.2 The focus of the policy is to promote positive behaviour and to provide working guidelines to schools to meet required standards in:
- preventing bullying;
 - dealing with bullying; and
 - providing information for parents, carers and the community.
- 3.3 There are considerable benefits from tackling bullying effectively and consistently at an early stage as it leads to:
- improved safety for young people;
 - improved mental and emotional well-being;
 - improved standards of behaviour;
 - improved academic performance;
 - increased self-esteem and motivation;
 - improved attendance;
 - improved partnerships, communication and trust among all parties; and
 - improved social competence for life.

Definition of bullying

- 3.4 Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which an individual or groups of individuals feel threatened, misused or undermined by another individual or group of individuals. Bullying is behaviour which can be, but is not always, a repeated attack of a physical, psychological, social or verbal nature by those who are able to exert influence over others.
- 3.5 While one off incidents must be dealt with sensitively, with understanding of the impact on the children involved, they are not considered to be bullying. Similarly bullying does not include children falling out and differences of opinion between children. We recognise, however, that one off incidents could be equally harmful in terms of impact.
- 3.6 Bullying can take many forms. It can include physical aggression, intimidation, threatening, extorting, pressurising, name-calling or teasing. Less obvious examples such as ignoring or excluding someone are also regarded as bullying and their possible effects should not be minimised.
- 3.7 Cyberbullying is the term used to define bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging and social networking websites. Texts, messages or images, which hurt, intimidate or embarrass another person are sent or posted on sites (respectme, Scotland's Anti-bullying service, 2009). Cyberbullying is not carried out face to face and people often don't know the identity of the person targeting them.

3.8 Bullying may be based on prejudice because of difference or perceived difference, on the perceived characteristics of the child or a group to which the child is perceived to belong such as:

- age;
- asylum seekers and refugees;
- body image;
- children whose parents suffer from substance abuse;
- disability;
- gender, including sexism;
- looked after children;
- race, ethnicity or nationality;
- religion or belief, including sectarianism;
- sexual orientation, including homophobia; and
- young carers.

The list is not exhaustive and could include any other aspect of difference.

3.9 Bullying can cause stress which can affect a child's health. Symptoms may include anxiety, headaches, sleepless nights, stomach upset, loss of confidence or self-esteem, depression and wanting to avoid a situation, for example, by not going to school.

Preventing bullying in schools

3.10 Positive anti-bullying strategies must include the development of an ethos whereby all members of the community, including the school community, take responsibility for reporting and challenging bullying.

3.11 Within the school, a positive ethos can be set by:

- giving explicit and consistent messages that bullying is unacceptable;
- seeking agreement on what bullying is;
- reviewing school life to identify any factors which might allow or encourage bullying; and
- making sure that the distribution and use of institutional power does not model bullying.

3.12 Within the school, awareness-raising can be promoted by:

- conducting an anti-bullying survey;
- displaying pupils' anti-bullying posters;
- running parent groups;
- highlighting the issue at assemblies;
- encouraging involvement of community police through inputs to particular year groups and stages, for example, P4/5 P7/S1;
- using materials on GLOW, the Scottish education intranet; and
- organising an annual anti-bullying day or week.

3.13 Children and parents can be actively encouraged to report bullying by:

- providing grievance procedures for children and parents;
- providing an intermediary service eg older pupils;
- letting children know how important it is to report bullying they have witnessed;
- letting pupils know to whom they can speak; and
- providing opportunities for pupils to communicate their concerns, for example, confidential letters, worry boxes and surveys.

3.14 Schools can offer support to bullied children by:

- reassuring them that they are not to blame;
- creating systems for early identification of vulnerable pupils;
- providing a bully crisis service offering support and practical advice;
- providing opportunities for friendship formation for isolated children;
- giving older children who have experienced bullying opportunities to support younger pupils who have been bullied;
- assigning named staff to pupils who have been persistently bullied;
- providing small groups of supportive peers;
- giving the message “there are no innocent bystanders”; and
- developing restorative practices.

3.15 Bullying behaviour can be changed by such things as:

- making pupils who bully accountable for their behaviour;
- developing sanctions which enable pupils to think about their misbehaviour rather than sanctions which depend on threat of force;
- helping pupils communicate more effectively in conflict situations;
- using circle time to resolve issues;
- using behaviour cards to monitor bullying as well as classroom behaviour; and
- adopting a restorative approach to resolve the problem.

3.16 A restorative approach consists of asking the following key questions:

- What has happened?
- Who has been affected?
- How can we involve everyone who has been affected in finding a way forward?
- How can everyone do things differently in the future?

Investigating, dealing with, recording and monitoring incidents

3.17 Incidents of bullying occur in all schools and it is essential that all such incidents are taken seriously and dealt with in an appropriate manner. The effectiveness of the monitoring process can be gauged through asking the following questions.

- Is there an explicit whole school policy or set of principles?
- How is this supported through staff and curriculum development?
- Do pupils know what to expect if they are bullied or caught bullying?
- Is there a no hitting back rule explained to parents and pupils?

- Is there joint staff, pupil and parent involvement in reviewing the policy?
- Is bullying mentioned in the school handbook?
- Does the policy include methods of monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness?
- Is what constitutes bullying made explicit?
- Are there designated staff with clear roles and responsibilities? Do pupils and parents know who they are?
- Are campus police officers involved where appropriate?
- Is there a systematic approach to checking and analysing the level of bullying and incidents?
- Are parents aware of and satisfied with procedures?

3.18 Each school should identify a member of its senior management team who will be responsible for the recording and overseeing of incidents and embedding tackling bullying in the policies and practices of the school. The anti-bullying co-ordinator should be identified to all parents, pupils and members of staff concerned with the procedures for reporting incidents. A pupil or parent may report an incident to any member of staff, but the responsibility for ensuring all incidents are consistently dealt with and recorded lies with the co-ordinator and the head teacher. The member of staff to whom the incident is first reported or who witnesses the incident should take the incident seriously. They must use their professional judgement in deciding on appropriate action to be taken. This will depend on the following factors:

- the impact on the children involved;
- the age of those involved;
- persistence or repetition of the incident;
- the level of premeditation or calculation;
- the number of individuals involved;
- knowledge of the individuals involved;
- the level and duration of distress caused; and
- the location and time of the incident.

3.19 Any member of staff might deal with an incident or it may be dealt with by the anti-bullying co-ordinator, the head teacher or appropriate pastoral care teacher. In all cases, the incident should be reported to the anti-bullying co-ordinator and recorded. If at any stage during the session, an incident occurs which gives particular cause for concern, staff are encouraged to consult with relevant members of staff within education and leisure services.

3.20 All reported incidents must be investigated timeously. Delays in dealing with the incident should only occur when reported at the end of a school day. The maximum time to carry out a full investigation is three working days. If a delay is unavoidable and the incident involves a child or young person, a letter should go home with the individual who has made the allegation, stating that the matter is under investigation. An exemplar letter is attached in appendix 2. Pre five establishments have their own incident recording and reporting procedures.

- 3.21 The exemplar letter to parents, attached as appendix 2, will usually be sent to parents of pupils in primary schools, and to pupils in secondary schools, up to the age of 16 years, with the pupil's consent. It is accepted, however, that the school's anti-bullying co-ordinator will use professional judgement in deciding to contact parents by letter.
- 3.22 The school will contact parents or carers upon completion of the enquiry, where appropriate.
- 3.23 A checklist is provided in appendix 3 to support the investigation of any incident. Notes for staff are provided in appendices 4a, 4b and 4c and advice on dealing with incidents is given in appendix 5.
- 3.24 If the investigation shows a need for disciplinary action to be taken against the children or young people involved, the following measures may be taken:
- explain that the incident will be recorded;
 - make it clear that the type of behaviour exhibited is totally unacceptable in any circumstances;
 - explain that actions have an effect and ask the children or young people involved to consider the results of the action taken;
 - involve other members of staff who work with the perpetrator(s) and victim(s);
 - interview the parents;
 - inform parents of the incident and any action taken, seeking their support; and
 - in extreme circumstances, such as physical attacks or ongoing harassment which is continuing outside the school gates, consideration may be given to notifying the police.

In all cases, the staff involved should take preventative measures to ensure that similar incidents do not recur.

Children or young people displaying bullying behaviour

- 3.25 Consideration should be given to both the discipline and support given to the children or young people. Disciplinary procedures against them are intended to change or modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully.

Such procedures may include:

- positive behaviour strategies with agreed individual goals to be attained;
- referrals to a school liaison group;
- involvement of other agencies and services such as educational psychologists, home link service, school nurses, support units etc;
- setting up social skills groups;
- establishing mentoring or 'buddying' systems for all children or young people displaying bullying behaviour as well as those affected by it;
- daily conduct sheets;
- withdrawal of privileges;

- class, group or individual discussion with staff about the effects of bullying; and
- peer mediation.

Children or young people affected by bullying behaviour

- 3.26 Support for children or young people affected by bullying behaviour is essential both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. Peer support, staff support, parental support and partner agency support can all play a vital role in ensuring the child or young person does not suffer from any long-term damage.
- 3.27 Each incident should be reviewed after an agreed period of time. After this period of time, staff should endeavour to meet with all children or young people involved to reassess the situation and the relationship between them. The manner in which this review takes place will depend on the nature of the incident and age of those involved.

Recording Incidents

- 3.28 High profile cases of school bullying have highlighted the need for a monitoring and recording system to be included in school and education authority policies. In addition Renfrewshire Council, through its scrutiny board, directed that monitoring and recording procedures are included in the revised policy on tackling incidents of bullying. To ensure consistency, a proforma has been devised for recording incidents at school level. A copy is included as appendix 4d along with guidance for members of staff and senior management. A standard form for annual returns from schools on reported incidents is included as appendix 6.
- 3.29 The proforma is not intended for use in recording every isolated incident of inappropriate behaviour. Professional judgement must be used to decide on the appropriate response to an incident. The best guide is to consult the children or young people affected. If it is felt that an incident of bullying has taken place, then it must be taken seriously and investigated. What might seem trivial to an adult can cause serious psychological damage to a child or young person and to their feelings of safety, self-esteem and value within the community. If, on initial investigation, the accusation of bullying appears to be confirmed, the incident must be recorded.
- 3.30 Incidents must be recorded on the proformas held by the anti-bullying co-ordinator when any of the following factors are present:
- bullying behaviour is repeated;
 - children or young people have already been made aware of the unacceptable nature of their behaviour through a verbal reprimand or work on the establishment policies;
 - the behaviour is premeditated or calculated;
 - the safety of the children or young people have been threatened; and
 - there is a clear intent to bully.
- 3.31 Incidents of disruptive behaviour with no intent to bully will be dealt with under the authority's additional support for learning policies.

Staff development and training

- 3.32 In schools, the member of the senior management team with responsibility for tackling bullying is encouraged to attend training sessions, keep abreast of developments as they occur and ensure that all staff in their school are well informed and able to implement the policies.
- 3.33 It is important that all staff, including janitors, playground supervisors, classroom assistants, secretarial and other school based staff, are made aware of the implications of the education authority and school policies on promoting positive behaviour and are involved in the implementation procedures. To ensure consistency and understanding of the issues and procedures, all staff should be offered support through the school's arrangements for continuing professional development and awareness raising on tackling bullying.

4 Impact assessment

- 4.1 Bullying can be based on prejudice, eg racism, sexual discrimination, homophobia, or perception of disability. Prejudice can result in inappropriate or bullying behaviour towards minorities or towards people perceived to belong to minorities, or people who share characteristics associated with minorities.
- 4.2 Staff dealing with incidents of bullying are expected to be sensitive to the involvement of prejudice and to take this into consideration in dealing with the incident. The monitoring form for schools, attached as appendix 6, has been updated to allow recording of various forms of discrimination which may be involved.

5 Monitoring and evaluation

- 5.1 Bullying can happen in any school. It is essential that all schools are alert to this and are extra vigilant in identifying incidents of bullying, ensuring they are dealt with and recorded. Every establishment is required to return copies of their completed logging forms, appendix 4d, and their completed monitoring form, appendix 6, to the customer services and planning team by the end of April each year. Nil returns are also required.
- 5.2 The forms will be collated centrally by education and leisure services and details of reported incidents, causes and trends will be reported to the education policy board. Best practice in tackling bullying will continued to be shared across establishments and education and leisure services.
- 5.3 Recording of the action taken during and after the investigation of an incident, using appendix 4e, will provide evidence that schools are following the education authority's guidelines and responding appropriately. The validity of the information contained in the monitoring returns will depend on the effective and consistent use of the education authority's recording form and procedures.

6 Policy review

- 6.1 The policy on tackling bullying in Renfrewshire will be reviewed within three years of its approval for implementation.

ESM/MM/LJ/LG
12 May 2009

Background sources and resources

Legislation

There have been a number of developments which have served to clarify the responsibilities of schools in relation to the rights of the child.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child contains a number of articles which have relevance to the responsibilities of schools in relation to the rights of the child.

Article 12 states: Parties shall assume to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 19 states: Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Article 28 states: Parties recognise the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity they shall, in particular... Take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conforming with the present convention.

The Human Rights Act allows people to claim their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights in Scottish courts and tribunals, instead of having to go to the European Court in Strasbourg. The Act underpins this by requiring all public authorities in the UK to act compatibly with the Convention rights.

Under the Scotland Act, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament are required to comply with rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) in exercising their powers. Although, the Human Rights Act does not contain any specific mention of the right of a child to be protected from bullying it may be that its existence will make it more likely that education authority and school policies may be challenged in the courts:

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 charges headteachers with a specific duty to consult pupils:

"The development plan shall include an account of the ways in which, and extent to which, the headteacher of the school will:

- a. consult the pupils in attendance at the school; and
- b. seek to involve them when decisions require to be made concerning the everyday running of the school."

The Malicious Communications Act 1988 is relevant to cyber bullying. Under this act it is an offence to send any communication which is threatening, false, indecent or grossly offensive.

The Communications Act 2003, section 127 on improper use of the public electronic communications network is also relevant to cyber bullying.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004), often referred to as the ASL Act, determines arrangements in education for children with additional support needs. This legislation replaced the term “special educational needs” with the term “additional support needs” and introduced a new framework to provide support for children and young people who require additional help. The key aim of this act is to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them achieve their full educational potential. The act recognises that additional support needs can be short or long term. Reference is made to children who are being bullied.

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 charges headteachers with a specific duty to encourage parents to be involved in their individual children’s learning and to work in partnership with parents on children’s education and learning.

In light of these Acts, it would be highly inadvisable for a headteacher to write a school policy on bullying without a meaningful input from pupils and parents.

Framework for a fairer future – the equality bill June 2008 quotes the following statistic - 6 out of 10 lesbian and gay schoolchildren experience homophobic bullying and half of those contemplate killing themselves as a result. This highlights the expectation that equalities should be made explicit in policies on tackling bullying.

National Agreement on Teachers’ Salaries and Conditions of Service 2001 - A teaching profession for the 21st Century.

The following extracts have particular relevance to the duties of teachers in dealing with bullying:

- **Headteacher**

- b. responsibility for school policy for the behaviour management of pupils

- d. the management and development of the school curriculum. Working in partnership with parents, other professionals, agencies and schools

- h. to manage the health and safety of all within the school premises

- **Teacher, Chartered Teacher**

- f. promoting and safeguarding the health, welfare and safety of pupils

- g. working in partnership with parents, support staff and other professionals

- j. contributing towards good order and the wider needs of the school.

- **Principal Teacher Curriculum, Pastoral**

c. contributing to the development of school policy in relation to the behaviour management of pupils

g. responsibility for the leadership, good management and strategic direction of pastoral care within the school

h. the development of school policy for the behaviour management of pupils

i. assisting in the management, deployment and development of pastoral care staff

j. implementation of whole school policies dealing with guidance issues, pastoral care, assessment and pupil welfare

k. working in partnership with colleagues, parents, other specialist agencies and staff in other schools as appropriate

Resources

Dealing with homophobia and homophobic bullying in schools: toolkit for teachers, developed by LGBT Youth Scotland and Learning and Teaching Scotland 2009

Safeguarding learners in a digital world, Becta consultation draft March 2009.

Useful websites

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.antibullying.net

www.bullying.co.uk

www.chatdanger.com

www.childline.org.uk/info/pages/bullying.aspx - for children and young people

www.childnet-int.org

www.children1st.org.uk

www.cybermentors.org.uk

www.digizen.org - deals with cyber bullying

www.GoodToKnow.co.uk

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.kidsmart.org.uk

www.respectme.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk – child protection on the internet

www.youngminds.org.uk/parents

Internet safety course

An SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) accredited online course, offered through Renfrewshire Libraries and Community Learning and Development, which is suitable for everyone, from young people to 'silver surfers'. The course covers:

- cyber bullying;
- internet grooming;
- protecting against identity theft;
- protecting systems against viruses and other threats;
- dealing with unwanted email; and
- useful tips for making safe and legal use of the internet.

The direct link to the course is www.sqasolar.org.uk or contact your local library or email libraries.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk for more information.

Exemplar letter to notify parents or carers of an incident

Dear

Allegation of Bullying

Your child [insert name] reported on [insert date] that [insert he or she] has been subjected to bullying behaviour. You can be reassured that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying and this allegation is being investigated thoroughly. You will receive further information within three working days. In the meantime you may contact me with any information relating to [insert name] which you feel is relevant.

If, at a later date, you become aware of any incidents of this nature, please alert the school in order that further action may be pursued.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

(Head Teacher)

I acknowledge receipt of this letter relating to an allegation of bullying behaviour

Name _____

Signature _____

Child _____

Form _____

Date _____

Checklist for investigating an incident

- Who was involved – is there a child or children affected by the incident? If so who is it or are they?
- In what way did the children or young people affected by the incident suffer?
- How did the incident start? Was it spontaneous or premeditated?
- What is alleged to have happened, from the perspective of all those involved?
- When did the incident take place?
- Where did the incident take place?
- Who witnessed the incident (pupils, parents, staff and others)?
- Who reported it to whom and when?
- Is there any background to this incident?
- Is there any other reason for considering this to be bullying behaviour?
- Why does the reporter or investigator of the incident perceive this to have been a bullying incident?
- To what extent did the incident affect others?
- What was the response of the children or young people affected, if such exist?
- What does/do the child or children or young people affected wish to see resulting from the investigation?
- Have parents been contacted?
- Should the incident be reported to the Police and is there a need to gather evidence for example, CCTV, mobile phone images etc.

Processing a report of bullying behaviour

1. A member of staff wishing to report an incident of bullying should approach either the year head or the anti-bullying co-ordinator with the top section of the logging form, appendix 4d, completed. A form should be completed for each pupil involved.
2. The co-ordinator and another senior manager, as appropriate, should reach agreement as to whether this incident constitutes bullying or should be addressed as an incident of indiscipline.
3. If deemed to be bullying, the co-ordinator will allocate a reference number to the logging form and list agreed action points for the named pupil only on the form. More than one logging form may be required for each incident, one for each child or young person involved. The reference numbers for each form relating to an incident should have the same stem with V1, V2, P1, P2 etc added, as appropriate, to distinguish between the participants. A follow-up time and date should be added to verify all action points completed satisfactorily or additional steps taken. The level of response to the incident may be informed by referring to the checklist in appendix 3.
4. If there are further issues arising from this same incident these should be noted on the update form, appendix 4e, with the appropriate reference number included. If the same pupils are involved with each other again but in a new incident, new forms and new reference numbers should be allocated as appropriate.

Notes for all members of staff

To fill in the logging form, appendix 4d, should take you no more than 5 minutes. It does not necessarily replace your own school's detailed and personalised report if such is kept, but it is necessary for education and leisure services to maintain an overview of incidents of bullying across the authority. It enables patterns and specific issues, which may arise in a number of schools, to be identified. This in turn will assist the authority in supporting schools in responding to such incidents.

Procedures

A first offence, for example, name calling or abusive language should be challenged, the nature of the unacceptable behaviour explained and the school policy on such matters outlined. The pupil should then be told that any further occurrences will be logged against them.

Any incident which involves actual or threatened physical abuse must always be taken VERY seriously and should be recorded accordingly. Complete top section of form 4d giving details of incident. Once complete the form should be returned to the year head or anti-bullying co-ordinator.

In order that consistency with this strategy be maintained, it is important that the class teacher or guidance teacher responsible for the pupil is informed of the incident, so that appropriate action is taken if the behaviour is repeated.

Notes for members of senior management team (SMT)

It is the responsibility of the SMT to follow up on incidents where appropriate and ensure incidents have been successfully and appropriately dealt with and are not continuing.

Where your school has a more detailed system of recording or uses pupil files to keep such information, you should continue to do so. However, a statistical record is now required for all incidents of bullying, to be recorded on the Council's proforma 4d. It would be appreciated if you ensure that all members of staff are aware of the procedures and have access to the proforma to complete when necessary.

It is unnecessary to complete a form for an incident of, for example, name-calling where this is the first incident of its kind with which a pupil is involved. It is, however, essential that all such cases are dealt with and the pupils spoken to, pointing out the unacceptable nature of this sort of behaviour and informing pupils that any repeat of such name-calling will be treated seriously and recorded. The person to whom such name-calling is directed, if any exists, should be assured that staff take such behaviour seriously, will not tolerate it in the school and will ensure it is challenged.

FOR SCHOOL USE

and copy to customer services and planning team with monitoring form



Tackling Bullying in Renfrewshire Schools

LOGGING FORM

School Name _____

Pupil Name _____ Class _____ Ref. No. _____

Date	Details of Incident (to be completed by member of staff reporting incident)		
Discrimination Tick any which apply	age	gender	disability
	race	religion or belief	sexual orientation
	Action Taken (to be completed by year head or anti-bullying co-ordinator)		Tick when completed
	Parental contact		

Signature of Staff Member Reporting Incident _____

Signature of Year Head/Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Appendix 4e

Tackling Bullying in Renfrewshire Schools

UPDATE FORM



**Renfrewshire
Council**

School Name _____

Pupil Name _____ Class _____ Ref. No. _____

Date	Details of Incident (s)/information relating to REF:	
	Action Taken	Tick when completed

Signature of Year Head/Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator _____

Advice on dealing with reported incidents

Schools within Renfrewshire have been dealing with incidents of bullying for a number of years. The lessons learnt from this experience in making appropriate responses are of great value to the full range of establishments. The following lists have been collated to support staff in dealing with incidents of bullying:

Do

- Do establish a whole school policy, which encompasses short and long term strategies to deal with bullying.
- Do assume bullying does take place.
- Do take complaints and concerns seriously.
- Do investigate immediately when the complaint is received from a pupil, parent or service user.
- Do show fairness, consistency and impartiality to all parties concerned during the investigation.
- Do respect confidentiality and limit knowledge of the incident to those directly involved with it and in dealing with any necessary action, which follows.
- Do hold information separately in an anti-bullying file with the outcome of the investigation justified or unjustified clearly noted.
- Do ensure that positive discipline is used in the school and that everyone understands that bullying will not to be tolerated.

Don't

- Don't say there is no bullying in your school.
- Don't say 'Go away, I'm too busy just now'.
- Don't make assumptions based on previous incidents or misbehaviour.



Monitoring Form for Schools

TACKLING BULLYING IN RENFREWSHIRE

Date	Ref Number	Investigation completed in 3 days		Discrimination (please tick all involved)						Cyber Bullying
		Yes	No	Age	Disability	Gender	Race	Religion or Belief	Sexual orientation	
Total number of Incidents										

Signed: _____ Head Teacher / Anti Bullying Co-ordinator

School: _____

Date: _____

Returns to Education and Leisure Services, Customer Services and Planning, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley PA1 1LE. Returns should be made by 30 April each year. The return should cover the period April to March inclusive.

If there have been no incidents reported please complete as a **Nil Return** with a note of:

- where bullying was alleged, but not substantiated; and
- an indication of successful practices in preventing bullying which could be used to share good practice with other schools.

School checklist

For each incident

- Bullying incident reported;
- Contact parents to inform them;
- Incident logging form completed;
- Reference number allocated;
- Incident recorded on monitoring form;
- Record the return of the tear off slip acknowledging the letter to parents; and
- Update form completed.

Monitoring

- Monitoring form and copies of logging forms completed from 1 April until 31 March submitted to customer services and planning team at Renfrewshire house by 30 April each year.

Dealing with bullying behaviour: guidelines for parents

Our school communities believe that each pupil has a right to an education free from fear and intimidation. Bullying behaviour is not tolerated. Bullying is a secret activity and difficult to detect. Communication between the home and the school is most important to ensure that no pupil suffers in this way. The vast majority of pupils at school are unaffected by bullying behaviour. There is no need for parents or carers to worry unduly. However the following signs and symptoms may suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- a pupil who has been happy at school, losing interest and enthusiasm for school. This may be reflected in deterioration in school performance;
- anxiety about travelling to and from school, requesting parents to drive or collect their child;
- unwillingness to attend school or worrying about the route to school;
- damage to or loss of bicycles or personal property, for example, clothes, books;
- a pupil returning from school in a very bad humour but reluctant to say why;
- unexplained changes of mood. These will often occur before the restart of school, for example, at the end of the weekend or the end of holidays;
- frequent minor illnesses, especially headaches and stomach aches, difficulty in sleeping, not eating, especially if they accompany the mood changes mentioned above;
- an increase in requests for money;
- unexplained cuts and bruises;
- recurrent nightmares; and
- bed wetting (with younger children).

These signs do not necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied. However, if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do need investigation.

A young person who has high self-esteem is most unlikely to be the victim of long-term bullying. Parents can help to build up self-esteem in their children, by encouraging them, by making them feel good about their appearance and getting them involved in activities inside and outside school. Any activities which lead to a sense of achievement will help build self-esteem.

Sometimes a child may be over-sensitive. To lessen the impact of typical behaviour of children, parents can help their child to learn to tell the difference between the kind of treatment almost everybody is subjected to from time to time, for example 'slagging', and behaviour where there is a deliberate intention to hurt. Parents can also help their children to distinguish between rough and tumble, and bullying.

Parents who are concerned may:

- be positive asking about what was good at school and who your child played with;
- sensitively ask questions to find out what exactly has been going on;

- if you see bullying on TV, use that to start a discussion;
- surf the internet with your children; and
- help your child to build up relationships outside school.

Advice for parents whose child reports being subjected to bullying behaviour;

- remain calm, listen to your child, reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you;
- firstly reassure your child that the problem lies with the bully's behaviour which removes the guilt many people feel when they are bullied;
- explain that bullying is never acceptable and every child has a right to feel safe;
- allow your child to tell the story;
- sensitively ask questions to find out what exactly has been going on. It is important to establish if your child is actually being bullied or if they are having difficulties with friendships. Either way, your child will need support to resolve the issue but the approach adopted will depend on the situation;
- discuss possible courses of action with your child and what your child would like you to do for them;
- always tackle incidents early, behaviour can escalate to physical bullying which usually lasts longer
- allow your child to have some sense of control over the actions to be taken;
- help your child with solutions by asking what did you do about it? If it happens tomorrow what will you do about it?
- advise your child to play near adults;
- advise children not to hit back, this does not solve the problem and limits the child's development;
- reassure your child that the issue will be handled sensitively
- if the bullying is happening in school or other organised group arrange to meet the appropriate member of staff to discuss the situation. In secondary this would be your child's guidance teacher or the depute head responsible for pastoral support. In primary school you can contact any member of the senior management team;
- contact the school to make an appointment. Phone, email or letter may be the best way as it puts less pressure on the child, who may fear what class mates will think or that they will make accusations of "grassing";
- ask for a copy of the policy which covers bullying. It may be a positive behaviour policy. The school should make a copy available to you if requested;
- discuss the situation with the member of staff and clarify the strategies and support that can be used to deal with the situation;
- keep a written record of incidents with date, time, people and brief details. Note what makes a good day and a bad day;
- work in partnership with the school and support services. It is important to keep in contact with the school or organisation so that together you can monitor the effectiveness of the actions taken;
- keep communicating with your child, but balance the negative with positive;

- if you are dissatisfied with the school, don't let your child see it as it is good for your child to see adults working together;
- your child may need additional support to build their confidence during and after the period of resolution. Parents play a major role in providing this support, however, you can also ask for your child to be referred to other support staff if you feel it is necessary, for example, home link worker, school nurse; and
- provide a positive role model.

If your child has stopped attending school because of being bullied you should inform the school immediately and seek support for your child to return to school as soon as possible.

Useful contacts

ParentLine Scotland – free confidential helpline 0808 800 2222

Mon/ Wed/ Fri 9am-5pm

Tues/Thurs 9am-9pm

ChildLine Bullying: 0800 1111

Bullying Line Scotland: 0800 44 1111

Useful contacts

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**Renfrewshire
Council**