



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

[Positive Relationships at Ardvreck](#)

[Respect for All - The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People](#)

[Ardvreck Complaints Policy](#)



Anti Bullying Policy

Providing a safe and happy learning environment is integral to achieving the wider aims of the school: a positive learning culture within a caring learning environment, where the timeless principles of integrity, resilience and traditional values are at its heart. If a pupil feels safe at our school they are in a much better position to realise these objectives. Ardvreck School is committed to providing a caring, safe and friendly environment for all of our pupils so that they can thrive and learn in a relaxed and secure environment.

Bullying is a breach of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This principles of Ardvreck School's Anti Bullying Policy are based on Education Scotland document ***Respect for All - The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Children and Young People***

The Principles

- We will promote positive relationships and behaviours amongst all children and young people and adults around them
- We respect the rights of children and young people as paramount
- We will work together to develop a culture of mutual respect and responsibility amongst all children and young people and adults around them
- We will seek to prevent and address bullying, through the development and implementation of effective anti-bullying policies and practices
- We will address all aspects of prejudice in order to make sure all types of prejudice based bullying are treated with equal importance (including bullying based on the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010, for more information on the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty see page 31)
- We will support effective communication, including sharing relevant and proportionate information, where appropriate, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Human Rights Act 1998



- We will seek to understand the experiences, and address the needs of children and young people, who are bullied as well as those who bully within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support
- We will share information where appropriate and work jointly to make sure we are co-ordinated and cohesive in all that we do
- We recognise bullying can have an adverse/detrimental effect on childhood development and we will try to ensure that every child and young person living in Scotland will have the same opportunities and an equal chance to succeed.

What do we mean by bullying?

Bullying is repetitive and targeted both in terms of 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.

This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. This behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/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).



Prejudice-based bullying

Bullying behaviour may be a result of prejudice that relates to perceived or actual differences. This can lead to behaviour and language that could manifest into racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith.

Prejudice-based bullying is when bullying behaviour is motivated by prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived identity; it can be based on characteristics unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance. For example, prejudice arising from socio-economic background or a child or young person's appearance. There is a need to address the root cause of prejudice as well as effectively respond to incidents as they arise in all settings.

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 supports progress on equality, particularly in relation to nine protected characteristics, which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

When is it not bullying behaviour?

It is important for children and young people to discuss how they feel and help them develop resilience to manage their relationships. We know that children and young people will act unkindly, fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of growing up and most children and young people have the ability to bounce back from this type of behaviour. It is important that children and young people have opportunities to learn to interact in socially



appropriate ways. Early intervention and prevention are key elements of an approach focused on ensuring we get it right for all of our children and young people.

Responding to attempted bullying behaviour

Sometimes, attempts to bully can have no obvious or immediate effect. Nevertheless the behaviour needs to be challenged and recorded appropriately and should not be ignored.

For example, the use of homophobic or other derogatory language, which may have no impact on the person it is aimed at, must still be challenged as the language itself is unacceptable and could impact on other people.

Some behaviour can be perceived as or assumed to be bullying. However, certain incidents can often be more serious and, in fact, criminal in nature. Understanding the individual circumstances is important to ensure that there is a clear distinction between bullying and criminal offences such as hate crime, child sexual exploitation and genderbased violence such as domestic abuse and sexual assault. For instance, when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying, this is sexual assault or abuse and a form of gender-based violence. There are laws to protect children and young people from this very serious type of behaviour.

Impact and outcomes of bullying

Bullying can have both long and short-term effects on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. There can be no doubt that being bullied is traumatic for the individual and is, therefore, likely to lead to a range of coping mechanisms and reactive behaviours.

The impact of bullying behaviour can extend far beyond the individuals involved. Bullying impacts on a person's capacity for self-management, their internal feelings of control, and their ability to take action. Their ability to take effective action is affected by someone else's behaviour. This is called a person's 'agency' (www.respectme.org.uk/bullying/what-is-bullying). Bullying affects individuals, families and relationships as well as a child's education and participation. A child that is bullied will not feel safe, included or respected and their wellbeing will be affected.



A child that is bullied and those causing bullying, may have wellbeing needs and these needs should be assessed and supported using the eight indicators of wellbeing - Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected and Responsible, Included.

Children and young people living in Scotland will have the same opportunities and an equal chance to succeed. Bullying directly and indirectly affects childhood development and future potential.

Failure to prevent and address bullying can lead to poorer mental health and wellbeing in adolescence and also into adulthood (L Bowes 20155). Good anti-bullying practices and policies impact positively on a school's or children's service's ethos and help children and young people feel more included and safe.

In dealing with bullying the school will be concerned:

- In the first instance with the prevention of bullying
- Then with supportive action for both the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s)
- Bystanders- 'Bystanders' can easily become perpetrators – by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, for example, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. The actions of 'Bystanders' may have severe and distressing consequences and it is the policy of this school that such activity will not be tolerated.



Implementation

Preventative measures:

The school makes it clear to pupils, staff and parents that it regards bullying as unacceptable.

Pupils' awareness of the issues relating to bullying is raised throughout the school by discussion in Tutor time, in PSHE lessons and in Houses.

- How friends can support each other
- Encouragement of the self-esteem of individuals and groups
- Discussion to develop an understanding of others and to recognise positively that people are different
- Challenging discriminatory language
- Know who to report bullying to
- Everyone has the responsibility to address bullying behaviour, whenever and wherever they see it

All staff support the school's policy on bullying and the Form Tutors and the House staff are always available to listen, advise and support.

If bullying occurs:

- When bullying has been reported by pupils, parents or staff, the matter should then be taken up by a senior member of staff
- The Head of Pastoral Care may also be contacted to speak to all parties concerned and affected
- Consequences will be in line with the Positive Relationships at Ardvreck policy
- Parents or others concerned with the bully or the bullied should be consulted if necessary and always if the bullying continues subsequent to a behavioural consequence
- Help will be given to the bully to confront their own actions and to the bullied to help in defending themselves. This will be done either individually or as part of a group



- If bullying is reported by the victim every effort will be made to verify the report as quickly as possible before action is taken. The victim should be encouraged to help in producing this evidence
- Staff should be seen to act promptly and decisively about bullying
- A record will be kept of all bullying incidents stored on the Management Information System
- Children can use the suggestion box to highlight concerns in a discreet manner
- Posters will be on display to highlight who children can talk to

If cyber-bullying occurs:

- Procedure as above, but additional considerations will be taken into account about the invasiveness of cyber-bullying, the size of the audience, and other such factors as cyber-bullying yielding evidence in a way that other forms of bullying do not

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Article 12 states that Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life
- Members of the Ardvreck School Pupil Council were consulted in the creation of this policy as were members of the Parent Governors Liaison Group

Further information

- There is no case for stereotyping either victims or bullies: both need help and guidance
- Pupils should be encouraged to report bullying. This is facilitated if they know that something is likely to be done about it
- Commitment to this policy is essential from all school staff. The procedures to prevent, detect and deal with bullying must be implemented consistently by all staff



The following websites are useful for more information and preventative methods:

www.stopcyberbullying.org

www.bullying.co.uk

www.cybermentors.org

www.cybermentors.org.uk/

www.respectme.org.uk

www.antibullying.net

This policy was created in consultation with the pupils, Parent Governor Liaison Group and staff and will be reviewed every three years.

Date	Reviewed by	Next review
August 2026	PGG	August 2029