

2014

# ANTI-BULLYING



'Aim for the Highest'

# POLICY DOCUMENT

## **Dalziel High School – Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Aims**

The aims of this document are to:

- Send a clear message that Dalziel High School has a zero tolerance approach to bullying.
- Outline an anti bullying strategy to prevent, as far as possible bullying behaviour in our school.
- Provide advice to pupils, parents/carers and staff, of what actions to take when bullying does occur.
- Outline the action to be taken when bullying behaviour is reported or suspected.

### **Our Commitment**

Dalziel High School is committed to our young people's social, physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing and view this as important as their academic attainment. Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated within our school. It is our aim to provide our young people with an environment where they can:

- Be supported and valued in a safe, positive environment.
- Feel safe, happy, secure, nurtured and healthy.
- Be respected and respect others regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and ability.
- Be free from all forms of abuse, bullying and discrimination.
- Flourish and achieve their maximum potential with the encouragement and support of staff.
- Prepare for the challenges, responsibilities and experiences of life in a modern society.

The above underpins the core values of our school. We accept that bullying has the potential to occur within our establishment and that this type of behaviour can act as a barrier to learning. Furthermore, it also affects those subjected to bullying on a social and emotional level. Bullying behaviour strongly undermines all that Dalziel High School stands for and it will not be tolerated.

## **A Definition of Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour, including verbal harassment and physical assault. Bullying is intentional harmful behaviour initiated by a person(s) and directed toward another. Bullying exists when someone with more social and/or physical power deliberately dominates and harasses another who has less power. Bullying is unjustified and typically repeated. Bullying can be subtle or it can be blatant. The suffering that it causes can be short-term or it can linger within the person for some years, in some cases for life. The reasons it is occurring may be clearly identified such as sexual orientation, jealousy, race, religion and differences in ability, physique or social class. Or, it may be for no clearly defined reason. Whatever the reason may be, it has a devastating impact and it must be addressed.

Bullying behaviour can take the following forms:

<b>Forms of Bullying</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Verbal	Name calling, abusive comments, teasing, sarcasm, put-downs, spreading rumours or hurtful gossip.
Social	Ignoring, excluding, rejecting or isolating a person.
Written	Graffiti, emails, texts (including images), social networking and instant messaging.
Material	Possession damaged or stolen, extortion.
Psychological	Peer pressure or being threatened.
Physical	Hitting, spitting, tripping up, any form of violence or intimidation.

Cyber bullying is a huge issue nowadays, especially with the increase in the use of technology. Cyber bullying is a form of indirect or social bullying that uses technological communications (text or images) to humiliate, harass, embarrass, tease, intimidate, threaten or slander an individual or group of people. Cyber bullies use instant messages, text messages, email, chat rooms, mobile phones, social networking or blogs and interactive games. Cyber bullying is the act of being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or compromising photographs online or through a mobile phone. Cyber bullying can fall into several of the categories in the above table.

## **Approaches to preventing and dealing with bullying**

Staff within the school will foster and establish open, positive and supportive relationships where children and young people feel safe secure, listened to, and secure in their ability to discuss sensitive issues. All teaching staff within the school will model behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing; and understand anti-discriminatory, anti-bullying, and child protection policies. Approaches that can help prevent and deal with bullying are:

- education and awareness of rights
- development of an inclusive and positive ethos and climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships; and a culture where bullying and discrimination is unacceptable
- pupil involvement and engagement
- mental, emotional and social health and wellbeing programmes and activities
- implementation of whole organisation programmes in positive relationships and behaviour, social and emotional skills and personal development
- restorative approaches
- nurturing approaches and principles
- personal support and additional support
- supporting and enabling parents
- acting on patterns of bullying incidents through monitoring

## **Staff Awareness**

### **Bullying Incidents – Staff Information**

Any member of staff has the potential to receive a report that a child is being bullied. All staff must be aware of the procedures that they must follow should they encounter a bullying related incident.

The clear advice to staff is to be aware that bullying has the potential to occur in our school and should look out for the following signs.

Look for signs that a young person is being bullied.

Possible signs of bullying:

- changes in mood
- changes in behaviour
- changes in social groupings
- isolation in and around the school grounds
- deterioration in personal appearance
- unexplained weight loss
- absenteeism
- patterned absenteeism
- withdrawn in lessons
- refusal to take part in P.E.
- low self esteem
- drop in attainment
- emotional e.g. tearful

Staff should also bear in mind that many pupils will not reveal that they are being bullied due to fear, humiliation, not wanting to admit it and/or not wanting a fuss made. Therefore, we must be alert and perceptive.

This list is not exhaustive nor is it absolute. It is simply a guide of common traits displayed by a young person experiencing bullying.

Staff may be directly told by a pupil that they are being bullied. Where possible, staff should discuss this with them in an area that is conducive to them speaking freely. Staff should be reassuring, caring and supportive as this sensitive issue may be difficult for pupils to talk about. Classroom chatter that you overhear may indicate that bullying behaviour is occurring. It is important that you also act on this. Pupils must be made aware that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Disclosures must be passed on to their Pupil Support Tutor or SMT member. All reports of bullying must be taken seriously and sufficiently investigated with appropriate action being taken in addition to support being given to all involved parties.

North Lanarkshire Council's leaflet "Bullying Advice for Parents/carers" can be viewed on the next page.

Pupils can:

- Talk to Pupil Support
- Tell any teacher, support assistant, office staff or janitor that they have a good relationship with
- Tell their Buddy
- Tell someone at home
- Visit the 'Respect Me' website: [www.respectme.org](http://www.respectme.org) or any other website from the list at the end of the document
- Contact Childline (0800 11 11)

#### Bullying Incidents – Parent/Carer Information

Parental influence is key to supporting the Anti-bullying ethos that we promote.

An open door policy is extended to our parents & carers. Parents should contact the school as early as possible if their child is being bullied or they suspect this to be the case. Parents can access North Lanarkshire's council information leaflet from our school website, entitled "Advice for Parents leaflet".

#### **Specific Response to Incidents/Alleged Incidents of Bullying Behaviour**

When a pupil reports an incidence of bullying they will be reassured that they have made an important step towards the resolution of the situation. The pupil will be interviewed by Pupil Support or designated member of the SMT. They will be asked about how they would like the situation to be resolved. Provisions will be made to ensure that the pupil is safe and support given so they can fully recover and regain their confidence and self esteem. We recognise that this may not be immediate and the support maybe required some time after the bullying has stopped.

The pupil(s) perpetrating the bullying behaviour will be interviewed separately and their side of the story listened to. Anyone else who may have witnessed the incident will also be interviewed in order to get a fuller understanding of the situation.

Those found to be bullying will be sanctioned in line with the schools discipline policy. The sanctions will depend on the severity of the incident. To prevent this behaviour continuing it will be necessary to support these individuals and try to ascertain if there are any reasons behind their behaviour.

All incidents will be recorded in click and go and also recorded in the schools Bullying Log.

### Who Can Help?

Teachers, parents, friends and the young person being bullied all have a role to play in preventing bullying.

Teachers generally know their pupils well and can spot behaviour which might indicate that bullying is taking place.

Similarly parents should communicate regularly with their children and be conscious of changes in everyday conduct that are unusual and difficult to explain.

Friends of a victim should know what to do and who to approach if they are aware of a classmate experiencing difficulty.

Personnel in the Education Department's Quality Development Service provide advice and support in relation to training and policy development. In addition the department works closely with Childline and young people can access confidential counselling by telephoning 0800 441111.

### Strategies and Sanctions

The key to solving problems relating to bullying lies in a good communications system. Clear channels should be in place to allow bullying to be quickly identified and effectively dealt with. As a parent you are a vital part of this process.

A team approach involving the victim, teachers, parents and peer group, where appropriate, is recommended. Support should take the form of a plan of action for the victim with regular checks and opportunities for discussion.

A similar approach should be adopted for the bully and this may, in addition, involve agreed sanctions and possible use of other strategies at the school's disposal, depending on the extent of the problem.

### School Policy

In line with Scottish Office advice every school should have in place a policy on combating bullying. Once agreed this should be communicated to teachers, pupils and parents and should be regularly reviewed in the light of experience.



# Bullying

In producing this leaflet reference has been made to the following leaflets which are available in all North Lanarkshire schools:

Advice for Parents, Promoting Positive Behaviour, Strathclyde Regional Council.

Talk About Bullying, Some Helpful Information For Parents, Scottish Teacher Parent Council.

This leaflet has been produced by the Quality Development Service, Education Department, Municipal Buildings, Kildonan Street, Coatbridge, ML5 3BT.



North Lanarkshire Council  
Department of Education  
Municipal Buildings  
Kildonan Street  
Coatbridge  
ML5 3BT  
Tel: 01236 812222  
Fax: 01236 812247

Designed by Communications Section

## Advice for Parents



## Bullying Advice for Parents

### Bullying - What is it?

**B**ullying is an activity which affects substantial numbers of young people in their daily lives. It causes great distress and hardship and is often difficult to detect or diagnose particularly since it can take a number of forms.

It is a fear for both pupils and parents and can take place both within and outwith school. Research shows that significant numbers of children are adversely affected by bullying and it happens to some extent in every school.

### Bullies and Victims - Who are they?

Bullies themselves are often victims of abuse or neglect. Once identified they need support for their own particular problems. The victims of bullying are often vulnerable, different or on their own, for example they may:

- be a newcomer to the school
- dress or speak differently
- react in a particular way to being bullied or are unable to stick up for themselves
- be in a specific group relating to gender, appearance, ability, beliefs, colour, preferences or place of residence.

### Bullying Activities

Bullying itself can take a number of different forms and may consist of one or more of the following:

- Verbal** e.g. being called names or being subjected to nasty comments or notes
- Social** e.g. being left out of things or ignored
- Psychological** e.g. being threatened or forced to do things

**Material** e.g. possessions stolen or property damaged

**Physical** e.g. being assaulted

It is often difficult to trace bullying and to make decisions about the form it takes. Care should be taken to establish facts and to understand the differences between common school and playground activities, such as arguments, disagreements, fights, and actual bullying.

### Signs to Look For

Young people who are bullied often:

- are unwilling to go to school or avoid particular days or lessons
- are frightened of walking to or from school or ask to be accompanied
- change their route to school
- arrive late at school or back from school
- avoid friends and other children
- show signs of deterioration in their school work
- mislay books, equipment or clothing
- ask for extra money
- continually lose their pocket money
- refuse to tell others what is wrong
- start bullying brothers or sisters.

Physical signs may include:

- damaged books, clothes or belongings
- coming home hungry
- mystery illnesses
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- bed wetting
- missing possessions
- unexplained cuts or bruises.

Victims may also:

- become withdrawn
- become easily startled, irritable, aggressive, have temper outbursts
- lose their confidence
- cry themselves to sleep or have nightmares.

### What Can Be Done?

The aim for all involved is to restore the young person's confidence in his or her ability to sort things out.

However, parents can also go through a range of emotions including feelings:

- Helpless** feeling there is nothing that can be done
- Angry** desiring revenge
- Anxious** for their child's well being
- Confused** not knowing what to do
- Disappointed** questioning why their child cannot cope.

It is important to stay calm and think things through before doing anything. It is also important that the child feels that you are in control, are prepared to listen, believe and take positive and appropriate action.

As a parent you need to take time to talk through the issues with their child. Sometimes, when this proves difficult asking the young person to write down what is troubling him or her can be a constructive way forward.

You must also give reassurance and gradually establish the facts. Sensitive discussion should lead to evidence that can be discussed with an appropriate person in school in planning a way forward.