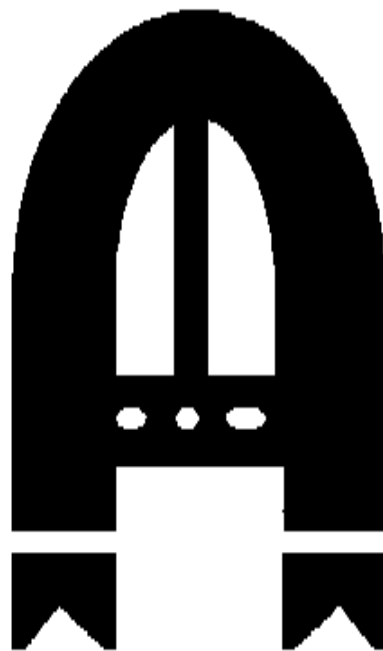


S† Augustine's RC High School



Equality and Anti-Bullying Policy



with respect we can make a difference



School Mission Statement

We aim to work together to build an inclusive community based on the Christian values of love, forgiveness and justice. We recognise, respect and celebrate the wonderful religious, cultural and social diversity we have within our school community. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals to help eliminate disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked-after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic status, or any combination of these. St Augustine's RC High School should be a place where all members of our learning community feel safe, secure, healthy and happy.

You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

*UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
article 19*

In Scotland, Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) ensures that this is the responsibility of everyone; ensuring that all children and young people are nurtured and supported to become confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens.

The eight indicators of well-being in children and young people are that they are safe, included, responsible, respected, active, nurtured, achieving and healthy. Bullying behaviour, prejudice and discrimination can have a negative impact on all of these indicators.

Bullying Behaviour

Definitions

Bullying behaviour is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects. Bullying behaviour can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. It may be emotional, verbal or physical. This may take place in person or through cyberbullying.

Research identifies bullying as any behaviour which is:

- An imbalance of power, leaving the person being bullied feeling defenseless.
- Harmful, carried out by an individual or group
- Repetitive or a one-off incident (although not all one-off incidents are bullying)
- Intentional or unintentional

Specific examples of bullying can be found in Appendix 1.

Bullying and discriminatory behaviours are not tolerated in any Children and Families establishment. It is the expectation of St Augustine's R.C. High School that all staff, parents and carers will work to prevent and reduce bullying behaviour and prejudice among children and young people.

Prevention

The school adopts a number of pro-active anti-bullying measures. These include:

- Early identification of vulnerable pupils
- S6 pupils offer peer support and advice to younger pupils
- Curricular discussions of bullying, prejudice and discrimination
- Tutor-time and assemblies are used to reinforce our policy
- Student issues are a standing item on all Departmental Meeting agendas
- Each year S2 pupils are invited to participate in the City of Edinburgh Council's bullying survey. This is used as an evaluation tool by Support for Pupils staff and / or Senior Leadership Team who review the results and plan actions as appropriate.
- Partnership services (Educational Welfare Officer, Counsellor, Youth Workers, Community Police, Educational Psychologist, Community Learning and Development Worker etc.) promote the development of an inclusive and positive ethos and climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships. They may offer one-to-one support as well as leading/contributing to the delivery of mental, emotional and social health and well-being programmes and activities.
- All members of the school community are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying which they may witness. This includes pupils, teaching and support staff.

What we do when bullying occurs

The school adopts a prompt response. We investigate all incidents thoroughly determining facts from both parties and other relevant people.

Parents are contacted when appropriate and plans are made to avoid any repetition of the incident.

We may employ a variety of strategies to support vulnerable pupils and pupils who engage in bullying behaviour. This may include one-to-one support, group work, restorative approaches and practice, supervised break times and support base provision.

We may work with partnership agencies including police, health and voluntary sector. Support for Pupils Staff/ Senior Leadership Team keep cases under review at regular intervals to ensure no repeat incidents.

Responsibilities

Managing bullying behaviour and prejudice is the responsibility of all staff and partners of the Children and Families Department. All staff, pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy and in its success.

Pupils in St Augustine's R.C. High School are expected to:

- Question, understand and learn what bullying behaviour is
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school
- Encourage and support others to tell a responsible adult or to speak out on their behalf
- Challenge racism, sexism, homophobia, disability and class and faith-based prejudice

Parents of St Augustine's R.C. High School pupils can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Encouraging their child to be a positive member of our school community
- Discussing the issues with their child
- Monitoring closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet, and intervening if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately
- Contact their child's Pupil Support Leader or Depute Head Teacher if they have any concerns about bullying of their child or of another child

All St Augustine's R.C. High School staff are responsible for:

- Being pro-active by promoting positive attitudes and good relations
- Building the capacity of young people to challenge prejudice and bullying behaviour
- Dealing appropriately and effectively with all allegations
- Keeping appropriate records and, if further action is required, referring reports of incidents to Pupil Support Leader / Depute Head Teacher

The Head Teacher of St Augustine's R.C. High School is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy
- Monitoring and reporting annually on the implementation of this policy
- Encouraging all parents, carers, pupils and staff to express their concerns and views
- Following the Children and Families Department's procedures including recording of incidents
- Identifying a member of senior staff as the Equalities Coordinator who is familiar with Council equalities guidance, including the 2016 Guidance on Supporting Transgender Young People
- Ensuring staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination
- Embedding and evidencing regular and proactive work through the improvement plan and/or the curriculum

Appendix 1

Examples of Bullying Behaviour

What is bullying behaviour?

Bullying behaviour can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. It can be verbal, physical, and emotional or involve online conduct which is unwanted and uninvited. The behaviour may be intentional or unintentional, can cause physical or emotional harm, may be repeated over time or be a one-off incident. Bullying is a combination of behaviours and the impact they have. It can be a range of behaviours.

Physical

This may include hitting, kicking, pushing, or taking or damaging someone else's property.

Verbal

This may include spreading rumours, name calling, teasing or talking about people.

Emotional

This may include excluding someone from the group, embarrassing someone or making them feel bad for being different.

Cyber

Cyberbullying does not take place face to face but occurs when technology is used to send messages, texts or images which hurt, humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Cyberbullying often involves the same type of behaviour as other bullying, for example, name calling, spreading rumours or leaving people out, but it takes place online on social networking sites, in chatrooms, during gaming or instant messaging platforms. The impact of cyberbullying is as hurtful and damaging as other forms of bullying behaviour. Some online behaviour is illegal. If an individual sends, posts or forwards indecent, racist, sectarian, threatening or inflammatory comments or photographs, they may be committing an offence and may be subject to prosecution.

Prejudice-based bullying

Bullying behaviour can be prejudice driven and may be based on differences such as:

- race
- religion
- nationality
- culture
- gender
- sexual identity
- disability
- additional support needs
- young carers
- care circumstances
- appearance
- health/medical conditions
- economic factors

Bullying behaviour related to race, religion, culture or nationality

Physical differences and different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds can be seen in the eyes of some to be evidence of one section of society being inferior/superior to another. A child or young person may be made to feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status. This can adversely affect the lives of those from minority ethnic, gypsy traveller, refugee and those of non-Scottish backgrounds as well as those from different cultural and religious communities.

Bullying behaviour related to sexual or gender identity

Bullying behaviour related to sexual orientation or gender identity is also classified as homophobic bullying or transphobia. Children or young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), or are perceived to be, face a higher risk of victimisation than their peers. Homophobic or transphobic bullying are among the forms of bullying behaviour least likely to be self-reported, since disclosure carries risks not associated with other forms of bullying. The child or young person may not want to report bullying if it means “coming out” to teachers and parents before they are ready and trust that this will remain confidential.

Bullying behaviour related to gender

Children and young people of both sexes can be affected by this type of bullying behaviour. It is based on the acceptability (or otherwise) of certain male and female behaviours and applies to those who do not conform. Personality traits, social activities and academic choices can influence this type of bullying behaviour. The child and young person can often be pressurised to ‘fit in’ with the crowd.

Bullying behaviour related to disabilities or Additional Support Needs

Whether in mainstream or specialised schools, children and young people with disabilities or ASN do not always have the levels of social confidence and robust friendship bonds that can protect against bullying behaviour. The behaviour can take any of the forms previously described, but can also include more manipulative behaviour which takes advantage of their emotional, behavioural or physical difficulties.

Bullying behaviour related to young carers or care circumstances

Children or young people can be more vulnerable to experiencing bullying behaviour because they provide care and assistance to someone in their family with an illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse problem. Young carers often take on practical and emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Children or young people in care are equally as vulnerable to bullying behaviour due to circumstances such as adoption, living away from birth parents or having social work involvement.

Bullying behaviour related to appearance or health/medical conditions

Children or young people with visible health or medical conditions, such as eczema or facial disfigurement, may be more likely than their peers to become subject to bullying behaviour. Perceived physical limitations, such as size and weight, and other body image issues can also result in bullying. Obvious signs of affluence (or lack of it) can also be exploited and used as a reason to exhibit bullying behaviour.

