

S† Augustine's RC High School



## Equality and Anti-Bullying Policy



with respect we can make a difference



## Introduction and Aims

City of Edinburgh Council is strongly committed to providing a safe environment for all people in its educational establishments. We are committed to developing positive relationships between all in the school community, children, young people, staff and parents.

Our core practices are the 4 Rs: Relationships, Rights Respecting, Resilience, Restorative.

Bullying, prejudice and discrimination are never acceptable and children, young people and staff have the right to learn and work in a safe, fair and secure environment. The emotional health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff is essential for our children to have the best start to life and to have successful life chances.

At St. Augustine's RC High School, 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 and work towards achieving their potential. This policy exists to protect all children, young people and staff within St Augustine's and keep them free from all forms of unacceptable behaviours by other children and young people.

This school procedure follows the City of Edinburgh Council's Communities and Families Procedure on 'Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People' (2020) which is based on '*Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People*'. (2017). This approach also stresses the importance of children's rights as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and complies with the legal obligations of the UNCRC, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (CYPA) and the Equality Act (2010).

*Article 2 – You have the right to protection against discrimination.*

*Article 19 – You have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.*

*Article 29 – You have the right to and education which develops your personality and your respect for other's rights and the environment.*

*UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*

This procedure has been revised and updated in consultation with staff, parent and pupil groups, including our Pupil Council, Parent Council and Rights respecting schools SIG.

In Scotland, Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) ensures that the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart and 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.

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We recognise that policy and procedures alone will not address the prevention of bullying; the culture and ethos of St Augustine's is key to ensuring respect, equality and inclusion.

## Our vision, values and beliefs



St. Augustine's RC High School



**Vision**

St Augustine's provides a welcoming and friendly environment, celebrating inclusion and diversity, providing high quality learning to enable all young people to achieve their potential.

- All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. St Augustine's RC High School supports every young person to achieve and attain their very best.
- We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals, respect individuality and celebrate diversity.
- We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination. We challenge inequality and promote inclusive, nurturing environments.
- We recognise the effects that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can have on a child or young person's feelings of worth, on their health and wellbeing and on their school-work.
- We provide opportunities for success through a variety of curricular and extra-curricular options and pathways.



St. Augustine's RC High School



**Values**

In our Catholic School we value:

Potential  
Respect  
Achievement  
Inclusion  
Support  
Equality

- We encourage creativity and support our young people to build the skills and resilience they need for the future.
  - We have the courage to aspire to the very best we can be. We belong to our school and we are very proud of our tradition and heritage.
- We use restorative approaches to repair and strengthen relationships between staff and pupils within our whole school community.

*See also supplementary guidance on preventing and responding to incidents of prejudice and discrimination related to protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. Part 1: Tackling Racist Incidents / Creating an Anti-racist Culture.*

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# Bullying Behaviour

## Definitions

Edinburgh Council has adopted the definition in Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (Scottish Government, 2017):

“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*me* 2015)

Bullying behaviours can take many forms. It may be emotional, verbal or physical. This may take place in person or through cyberbullying. Examples of bullying behaviours include:

- Name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening.
- Ignoring, leaving out or spreading rumours.
- Hitting, tripping, kicking.
- Taking and damaging belongings
- Sending an abusive text, email or instant message, or posting an abusive comment on a social networking site (online or cyber-bullying).
- Targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be.

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
- Intentional or unintentional

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.

**Bullying or inappropriate behaviour** is a more useful phrase than 'bully'. The term bully labels an individual with a fixed trait. Whereas bullying behaviour can be transient and temporary and can be changed/corrected.

**Person being bullied/picked on/isolated or person on the receiving end of bullying behaviour** are more useful phrases than 'victim'. The label victim can be disempowering. The term victim labels an individual with a fixed trait whereas bullying experiences can be temporary.

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## **Discrimination, Prejudice-based Bullying and the Equality Act 2010**

Bullying behaviour can often be rooted in prejudice and discrimination due to difference or a perceived difference. We are committed to challenging discrimination, prejudice-based bullying and language, and to fulfilling our duty under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out rights which include legal protection from discrimination to any of the nine protected characteristics: **disability; race; sex (gender); pregnancy/maternity; religion/belief; sexual orientation; gender re-assignment; age; marriage/civil partnership**

Note: In relation to the education of children and young people, the protected characteristics of age, marriage and civil partnership are not included.

We recognise that children and young people can also experience bullying in relation to: asylum seeker or refugee status; body image; being care experienced; social or economic status; young carer responsibilities; imprisonment of parents/carers, siblings, or other family members.

We recognise that children and young people can experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination because of any of these individual factors or a combination of factors.

### **Hate incident or hate crime**

A bullying incident is a hate incident if the victim or anyone else thinks it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. If the incident is a criminal offence and the offender targeted the victim because of their prejudice or hostility based on any of these characteristics, this is a hate crime. All hate crimes should be reported to Police Scotland through the School Link Officer. In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of staff / Equality Co-ordinator should seek advice from the School Link Officer.

# **Prevention**

## **PROMOTION OF EQUALITY**

**Through the Curriculum for Excellence, and further developing our curriculum, we aim to :**

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities as responsible citizens.
- Challenge stereotypes, bias and discrimination, including prejudice-based attitudes and language
- Provide age-appropriate reading materials and resources that positively reflect and represent diversity, e.g. family structures that include single parents, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, same-sex parents.
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals.
- Raise awareness about bullying and our Anti-Bullying Procedure across a range of school subjects.

By promoting a positive school ethos, with a focus on rights, equalities and health and wellbeing, we hope to prevent bullying, prejudice and discrimination happening.

- The school adopts a number of pro-active and preventative anti-bullying measures
- We update posters and school display screens regularly and use them to remind pupils that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable and what to do if they or someone they know is being bullied or experiencing prejudice.
- Encouraging everyone to respect others even if they don't like them, they don't agree with them or do they don't enjoy the same things they do.
- Tutor-time and assemblies are used to reinforce our policy as well as a range of events which promote the school's diverse nature
- Bullying, prejudice and discrimination and other equality-related issues are a standing item on the SLT meetings, faculty meetings and our Pupil Council agenda.
- We carry out regular surveys and focus groups to evaluate ethos and health and wellbeing in the school.
- The school holds diversity, anti-bullying projects to raise the profile of these issues. We also hold anti-bullying year group assemblies and discuss bullying in PSE lessons.
- The Rights Respecting School group ensure that all the pupils are aware of and learn about their human rights through lessons, events, assemblies and displays. The Rights-Respecting values are being embedded in the school and so pupils are being empowered to become more active citizens and learners.
- The school's Development Officers and a range of 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

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social health and well-being programmes and activities. Interventions for pupils which aim to build protective resilience factors eg. Seasons for Growth, Nurture, School of Rugby, LIAM etc

- We have a successful Buddy system to support transition from primary school
- Our staff receive regular training to increase their awareness and understanding of all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination as well as to develop skills in restorative practice.
- 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.
- Information provided to children, young people and parents/ carers explaining how the establishment deals with bullying.
- Consistent responses to negative interactions, distressed behaviours and bullying behaviours led by restorative practices.
- Auditing of statistics by Support for Pupils staff and / or Senior Leadership Team who review the results and plan actions as appropriate.
- Email addresses on school website for PSLs and Year Heads which could be used for reporting – currently investigating an online / anonymous reporting

## **What we do when bullying occurs**

Sometimes a child or young person may not be engaging *consciously* in bullying behaviour. They may not understand or be aware that they are bullying. However this behaviour can still impact negatively on others and must be taken seriously. The school has an appropriate and proportionate response to bullying incidents, in line with their legal responsibility to support and educate all those involved, including pupils identified as displaying bullying behaviours. The school adopts a prompt response. We investigate all incidents thoroughly determining facts from both parties and other relevant people.

## **How we support pupils who are bullied or experience prejudice and discrimination**

*See also supplementary guidance on preventing and responding to incidents of prejudice and discrimination related to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. Part 1: Tackling Racist Incidents / Creating an Anti-Racist Culture.*

We listen to the child or young person seriously.

- We reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling. Young people are reassured that they do not deserve this and it is not their fault. We assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We encourage them to talk about how they feel, find out what happened and who was involved
- We involve them in making choices about how the matter could be resolved. Listen to the views of the child who perceives they have been bullied or experienced prejudice about what would be helpful.
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We ask them to report any further incidents to us straight away.
- We affirm that the bullying can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does.
- We say clearly what will happen next and that we will update them on progress.
- When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check that bullying has not started again.

### **What happens next?**

- The teacher or member of staff who receives the report will record the incident on a Wellbeing Concern form and discuss next steps with the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator.
- At all times, child protection procedures and/or Risk Management procedures should be followed, if necessary.
- In most cases, further investigation will be done by the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator or Pupil Support Leader (secondary)

Further investigation may involve:

- Speaking with the children or young people involved, preserving confidentiality.

Policy written: Sept 2016

Reviewed: May 2018; August 2019; August 2020; March 2020; Dec 2020



- Speaking with children or young people or others who witnessed the incident, preserving confidentiality.
  - Speaking with parents (*after consultation with the child or young person*)
  - Seeking advice from partner services and relevant organisations
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime), the designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will report this to Police Scotland.
  - In the case of hate incidents, the designated member of the senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will seek advice from Police Scotland.
  - If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has taken place, we will take appropriate and proportionate action (see examples of possible actions below)
  - If it is found that bullying, prejudice or discrimination has not taken place, we will speak with the child or young person who reported the incident and offer further support if needed.
  - At all times, we will update the child or young person who reported bullying, prejudice or discrimination.

### **Our work with pupils who bully others or present prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes / behaviour**

A child or young person who is bullying someone else may not be doing this consciously but the impact of bullying, prejudice or discrimination is still felt and this is taken seriously. Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or present prejudiced or discriminatory attitudes / behaviour will be treated fairly and consistently using actions that are proportionate and appropriate to the age and stage of the child and to the incident (see below).; **they should be supported to identify the feelings and views that have caused them to act in this way and challenged, through education and learning, to develop alternative ways of behaving.**

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in the incident separately.
- We listen to their version of events and take time to discover the reasons for the behaviour.
- We talk to anyone who may have witnessed the incident.
- We reinforce the message that bullying, prejudice and discrimination are not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop.
- We address prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes that may be behind the behaviour
- We seek a commitment to stop bullying.
- We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
- We consider consequences under our school's Positive Behaviour Management Procedure.
- We consider what support the pupil needs and whether other referrals are required, e.g. educational psychologist, counsellor.
- In all cases where there may be criminal implications (e.g. sexual assault or hate crime) we report this to Police Scotland.
- In the case of hate incidents, we seek advice from Police Scotland.

Policy written: Sept 2016

Reviewed: May 2018; August 2019; August 2020; March 2020; Dec 2020

- We advise pupils responsible for bullying, prejudice or discrimination that we check to ensure that the behaviour stops.
- We contact the parents of the pupil(s) at an early stage.
- We follow up after incidents to check that the bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour has not started again in any form.

### **Some examples of our actions**

- Restorative practices, including acknowledging grievances. We focus on relationships, helping children to recognise that their actions have consequences and involving them in a discussion about how to make things better.
- Parents are contacted when appropriate and plans are made to avoid any repetition of the incident.
- Peer mentoring and mediation.
- De-escalation strategies.
- Physical separation of person/people presenting bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour, where necessary and possible.
- Use of support base to increase confidence and provide support.
- Consequences, including loss of privileges.
- Assessment of additional support needs, including counselling, for the person being bullied or experiencing prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour or for the person who is bullying or displaying prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour e.g. one-to-one support, group work, restorative approaches and practice, supervised break times and support base provision.
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector.
- Referral to specific support service, such as Psychological Services, Education Welfare Service, Social Work or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Note: Exclusion from school is not itself a sanction or punishment for bullying, prejudiced or discriminatory behaviour and would only be used in specific circumstances and as a last resort.

### **Online bullying and bullying outside the school premises**

We know that bullying, prejudice and discrimination can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The behaviour may be presented by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent informs us of bullying, prejudice or discrimination outwith the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle these incidents outside of school.
- Talk to the Head Teacher of any other school(s) whose pupils are allegedly presenting bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour.
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses
- Talk to the police, if appropriate.

### **Follow-up**

When the incident has been resolved, we monitor and check with the child or young person that bullying has not started again.

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## **Responsibilities and Reporting bullying, prejudice and discrimination incidents**

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.

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

- responsible for the introduction and implementation of this procedure. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents/carers must play an active part in following the guidance and putting it into practice.
- Communicating and Implementing this policy to staff, volunteers, young people and parents and carers
- 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
- 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

### **The Equalities Co-ordinator, in consultation with the Head Teacher, is required to:**

- ensure that all allegations are reported and recorded rigorously
- monitor SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module reports regularly, at least termly
- monitor and report annually on the implementation of this procedure
- supervise the review and updating of this procedure at least every three years
- Teachers and support staff are expected to be pro-active, to treat all allegations seriously and to refer reports of incidents to the Equalities Co-ordinator / designated member of the senior leadership team. The incident is recorded accurately with future actions detailed.

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

- Respect others even if they don't like them, they don't agree with them or do they don't enjoy the same things they do.
- Promoting positive attitudes and relationships.
- Question, understand and learn the differences between bullying and other non-bullying behaviours and Challenge racism, sexism, homophobia, disability and class and faith-based prejudice in an appropriate manner
- report all incidents and suspected incidents of any type of bullying, discrimination or prejudice that they experience to a member of staff, where it is safe for them to do so

Policy written: Sept 2016

Reviewed: May 2018; August 2019; August 2020; March 2020; Dec 2020

- support each other and to seek help from a member of staff, 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
- if they don't feel able to speak to a member of staff, or complete form on the school website or contact an external organisation for advice and support, e.g. Childline, LGBT Youth Scotland or ELREC.

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

- Building the capacity of young people to challenge prejudice and bullying behavior Supporting children and young people to understand the differences between bullying and other non-bullying behaviours.
- be pro-active in implementing the procedure and promoting positive attitudes and good relations
- treat all allegations and observation of bullying, discrimination and prejudiced behaviour or language seriously
- Dealing appropriately and effectively with all allegations and address incidents, where appropriate
- Keeping appropriate records and, if further action is required, referring reports of incidents to Pupil Support Leader / Depute Head Teacher (record any incidents on a Wellbeing Concern form)
- inform the Equalities Co-ordinator / designated member of staff of all incidents
- Supporting their head of establishment in undertaking investigations and gathering information.
- Being aware of this procedure and local policy and procedures and seeking relevant learning and development opportunities.

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

- Safeguard and promote their child(ren)'s health, development and welfare.
- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Question and learn the differences between bullying and other non-bullying behaviours.
- work collaboratively and respectfully with staff, children and young people and other parents/carers where appropriate to help ensure bullying, discrimination and prejudice cannot thrive
- speak to any member of staff (the class teacher, guidance teacher or member of senior leadership team) if they have any concerns about bullying, discrimination and prejudice experienced by their child or by another child / children at the time of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter
- encourage their children to be positive members of our school community
- monitor closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet and to intervene if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately.
- understand that we seek to understand the experiences and address the needs of all children and young people who experience bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour as well as those who present bullying, discrimination or prejudiced behaviour. We do this within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.
- be aware that they can contact a relevant external organisation for advice and support

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- Speak to the Head Teacher if their concerns continue following school staff's intervention.
- be aware of of the school's complaints procedure/City of Edinburgh Council's Advice and Conciliation service if concerns continue following the school and Head Teacher's intervention
- **respectme** have a guide for parents and carers on their website – Bullying Behaviour: A Guide for Parents and Carers (available at <http://respectme.org.uk/resources/publications/>)

## **RECORDING AND MONITORING BULLYING INCIDENTS**

The designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator or Pupil Support Leader (secondary) will record all incidents in the Bullying and Equalities module in SEEMiS.

The following information is recorded:

- the person experiencing the behaviour
- the person displaying the behaviour
- the nature and category of the incident
- the perceived reason(s) for bullying
- actions already taken and future actions
- conclusion (being addressed, resolved, not resolved, unfounded)

All incidents should be recorded should be recorded on in the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module,. Records should include whether the incident is bullying, and/or prejudice-based and the nature of this. If there is any dispute or doubt (on the part of any individual) about whether the incident was or was not bullying or prejudice, the incident and the doubts should be recorded.

The designated member of senior leadership team / Equalities Co-ordinator will:

- ensure that this procedure is implemented.
- monitor SEEMiS reports on regular basis, at least termly.

Records of bullying, discrimination and prejudice-based incidents will be collected centrally from SEEMiS by the local authority from August 2020 on a termly basis.

## **COMMUNICATING THIS PROCEDURE**

We promote our anti-bullying procedure throughout the session. This procedure is on the school website. Posters are on display around the school advising pupils how they can report bullying, discrimination and prejudice, or seek confidential help. E-mail or online reporting, as well as in person, are regularly promoted via the school bulletin. The procedure is also reinforced through PSE classes and assemblies.

## **CONCERNS AND FEEDBACK**

We recognise that there may be times when pupils or parents/carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying, discrimination and prejudice or a wider community issue. If a pupil or parent/carer feels that an incident/issue has not been fully resolved to their satisfaction, we ask them to contact the Head Teacher in the first instance.

If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents/carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then parents/carers can use the Council's Advice and Conciliation Service.

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We are also pleased to receive positive feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well.

At any time, a pupil or parent/carer can seek advice and support from an external organisation.

## **EVALUATING AND REVIEWING OUR PROCEDURE**

We evaluate the effectiveness of this procedure on an annual basis, reviewing the number of incidents that are reported alongside the attendance, exclusions, attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups. Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying are reviewed through questionnaires and focus groups. Feedback received from parents is also taken into consideration. The procedure is reviewed formally every 3 years.

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