



Balgreen Primary School: Equality, Diversity and Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures 2024-27
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THE POLICY

OUR SCHOOL'S VALUES AND BELIEFS

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included.

Our shared values of mutual respect between staff and pupils, high expectations of success within a nurturing, caring and supportive environment underpin our positive school ethos. Within our wider school community, we promote tolerance and understanding of one another, value and celebrate diversity, regardless of race, religion or ethnicity.

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination

We recognise the effects that bullying and discrimination can have on pupils' feelings of worth, on their school work and in the community. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals in our learning community.

We recognise that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on account of their 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.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying

Bullying is an abuse of (assumed) power. People who are bullied are very upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Their own dignity has been affected. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**. **Cyber-bullying** is bullying behaviour that takes place via digital technologies (computers/mobile phones/games platforms/tablets) or social media. (Council Policy)

"**Bullying** ... can make you feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. Something only needs to happen once for you to feel worried or scared to go to school or other places you enjoy going to. Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is, doesn't mean its not bullying" (Respectme.org)

Equalities



We use the legal definition of 'equalities' which gives protection to people who have specific characteristics - for example being gay, lesbian or bisexual or from a minority ethnic group or disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone undergoing gender change, as well as those of particular faith groups. The Equality Act 2010 defines these as 'protected groups'. Looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from poor backgrounds can also be included as equalities groups.

Racism

The Council uses the same classification as Police Scotland, taken from the MacPherson report on the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that took place in 1999, i.e.

"A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person."

While this is not absolutely definitive, all allegations must be treated seriously from the outset, investigated and if substantiated dealt with and then recorded using the authority's proforma. This approach is in line with the Balgreen's anti-bullying procedures and all forms of identity-based bullying.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. He is also responsible for nominating an Equalities Coordinator who is familiar with Council equalities guidance, including the most recent guidance on Supporting Transgender young people. The Head Teacher is the Equalities co-ordinator at Balgreen. However all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success.

Pupils are expected to

- Report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that other children may be afraid to report. Work is delivered out at Balgreen annually on empowering children to report any incidents of bullying, coinciding with Anti-Bullying week in November.
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school. Work is carried out at Balgreen to develop understanding of empathy with all those involved.

All school staff are expected to be proactive, to treat all allegations seriously and keep records. While teaching staff and support staff may deal with incidents in the first instant, incidents may be referred to the school Senior Management Team for further investigation, discussion, reflection and involvement of parents/carers.

Parents can help by

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Encourage pupils to ensure those around them are safe, happy and included at all times.



- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community and to take responsibility of their actions at all times.
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture inside and outside of school.
- Speaking to the Head Teacher if their concerns are serious and ongoing.

Management Teams are expected to

- Monitor and report annually on the implementation of this policy
- Supervise the review and updating of this policy at least every four years.
- Review procedures in school to ensure we are supporting all of our pupils.
- Engage with partner services, parents and carers to support pupils.

CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS ... AND COMPLIMENTS

In spite of our serious intent to eliminate bullying, there may be parents who feel that schools have not taken their concerns seriously or not dealt effectively with incidents affecting their children. If having spoken to the Head Teacher they remain dissatisfied, they may seek further advice or make a complaint to the Council as described below.

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we ask that this be brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure.

If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then the matter should be referred to the Advice and Complaints Service at:

https://orb.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/200313/policies_and_procedures/71/education_advice_help_line_and_complaints.

We are also pleased to receive compliments from parents when things have gone well.

COMMUNICATING THIS POLICY

- Copies of this policy are available from the school office

EVALUATING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY

Year on year monitoring of recorded incidents by the school management team will impact on procedures here at Balgreen and further inform the policy.

We evaluate this policy using the following measures:

The number of incidents that are reported to staff August-June each school year.

Rates of attendance, exclusions and attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups.

From the comments received in our comments box.



The number of complaints and compliments that we receive from parents.
The policy and procedures will be reviewed every 4 years.

PROCEDURES

PREVENTION

- We remind pupils throughout the year about how our school deals with bullying, including cyberbullying.
- We make use of the Council's 2016 Guidance on supporting Transgender, Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual pupils.
- Staff will undertake CPD training to inform practice here at Balgreen.
- Place2Be will support pupils in the implementation of the policy and supporting pupil well-being
- Our nurture base will provide support to pupils as appropriate

Sex, Relationships and Parenting Education is provided that meets the needs of every learners including LGBT (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender) young people and will always challenge sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Age and stage appropriate materials are available in all classes to support pupil understanding, develop tolerance and to celebrate diversity.

Posters are used to remind pupils that bullying and discrimination are not acceptable, nor tolerated, and tell them what to do if they are bullied. Equality is taught at all stages.

Balgreen Primary School works closely with:

- Community police
- Health visitors
- Social services
- School nurse
- Place2Be
- Educational psychologists
- Partners from a range of health services

The school holds diversity and anti-bullying weeks and assemblies. Work is displayed throughout the school reflecting pupil understanding. Roots of Empathy has been adopted in our school to support pupil understanding.

Training opportunities are promoted to staff and parents that explore the development of attachment, empathy, resilience and problem-solving skills.



This school is working towards recognition of achievement of Rights Respecting School, looking at the rights of the child to underpin its developmental work and curriculum.

There is a buddy system where Primary 7 pupils have responsibility to support and nurture younger pupils in Primary 1 and 2. Paired reading opportunities further develop their relationship with younger pupils. New pupils to the school will receive a buddy to support them in the first weeks of their time at school.

The school supports nurture and friendship groups in their day-to-day work, through the work of Place2Be and programmes of work, including 'Creating Confident Kids' and the 'Resilience' programme.

Training for staff in the playground aims to ensure we are supporting pupils at all times at Balgreen.

We regularly review our arrangements for young people to raise issues confidently with staff. All staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination.

WHAT WE DO WHEN BULLYING OCCURS

A child may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and this is taken seriously. The level of awareness of a child who is bullying is a significant factor in how it is dealt with.

Our support to pupils who are bullied or discriminated against

- They 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 and try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- We ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us
- We affirm that it can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does

Our work with pupils who bully others

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying
- We listen to their version of events and talk to anyone who may have witnessed the bullying.
- We seek to understand and address the causes of their behaviour
- Where there is mutual will, we undertake restorative meetings
- We reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop.
- We seek a commitment to this end.
- We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know if they are being bullied.



- We consider sanctions under our school's Relationship Policy.
- We advise pupils responsible for bullying that we check to ensure that bullying stops.
- We ensure that those involved know that we have done so.
- When bullying occurs, we contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.
- We work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they need.

Other strategies include:

- Peer mentoring and mediation
- Counselling
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector
- De-escalation strategies
- Physical separation of person/people bullying, where necessary and possible
- Nurture base, where feasible
- Sanctions, including loss of privileges(break times, lunch times)
- Assessment of additional support needs for person being bullied or person bullying.
- Referral to specific support service, such as Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare Service, Social Work service or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. In some cases a referral may be made to the Children's Reporter
- In extreme cases, Child Protection procedures will be considered

Involvement of Police as needed

Exclusion from school is not itself a sanction or punishment for bullying behaviour and will only be used as a last resort

Reporting and Recording Incidents

All incidents are recorded and acts of bullying or discrimination on ground of race, disability, gender, faith and sexual orientation are of equal concern and are all clearly distinguishable. Bullying incidents are logged on SEEMIS as per guidance.

We send annual summaries of incidents to Council headquarters on request.

Cyberbullying and bullying outside the school premises

We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The bullying may be done 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 tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.



- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils are allegedly bullying.
- Address the issue through restorative processes.
- Consider additional support, police involvement and Child Protection procedures when required.

RELATED POLICIES

Other Policies that are available for parents and cares include:

- Balgreen Primary School's Relationship Policy
- Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour Policy (National Policy)
- Child Protection Policy (School Policy and National Policy)
- Complaints Policy (Authority Policy and School Policy)
- Additional Support for Learning Policy
- City of Edinburgh Council Guidance (2016) on supporting Transgender, Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual young people