

Lenzie Academy

Anti-Bullying Guidelines

“Respect for All has a fundamental role to play in helping us realise our vision for all children and young people. It provides a holistic framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. Respect for All reflects Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and recognises that bullying impacts on wellbeing. In order to thrive and achieve their full potential, children and young people need learning environments which are safe, nurturing, respectful and free from fear, abuse and discrimination’.

Scottish Government (2017) – Respect for All: A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People.

May 2024

Rationale

These Anti-Bullying Guidelines provide guidance to pupils, staff, parents and carers of Lenzie Academy on preventing, responding to and reducing bullying behaviour in line with East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (2015, updated 2019).

Aims

Lenzie Academy is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people in its educational establishments and promoting a culture where bullying is recognised as being unacceptable.

Bullying behaviour is not, and should never be, an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up.

The success of any anti-bullying policy requires a clear response for schools and guidance on how to prevent, respond to and reduce bullying behaviours. Current research has shown that bullying is a likely cause of stress for children and young people and has a direct correlation with poor mental health.

Lenzie Academy aims to:

- provide leadership and ensure accountability through systematic monitoring and review of data;
- work with children and young people to develop a positive and inclusive ethos and culture;
- deliver effective policies and practices which proactively prevent and deal with all types of bullying behaviour;
- ensure a co-ordinated and cohesive response to bullying across our school community.
- Develop and foster positive relationships amongst children, young people and adults which are mutually respectful, responsible and trusting; and promote their emotional health and wellbeing;
- build capacity, resilience and skills in children and young people, and parents and carers, to prevent and deal with bullying;
- prevent bullying of children and young people through a range of policies, strategies and approaches;
- support children, young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying.

Definitions of Bullying

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 behaviour may be related to prejudice-based attitudes and behaviours which may compound other differences or difficulties in a child or young person's life. These include:

- gender reassignment
- pregnancy & maternity
- racist bullying
- religion and belief
- homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying
- disablist bullying;
- body image;
- sexism and gender;
- looked after children and young people;
- young carers;
- socio-economic group

With this in mind, vulnerable children and young people may be particularly at risk of experiencing bullying.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- racist abuse
- sexist abuse
- harassment
- homophobia
- biphobia
- transphobia
- sectarianism
- sending abusive emails, text messages or making abusive comments on social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Whatsapp or Snapchat)
- assault
- forcing people to do things against their will e.g. stealing
- damaging or stealing property
- malicious notes or gossip
- teasing, cold shouldering/social isolation and being 'picked on'
- personal remarks about body image/appearance, disabilities, learning needs, family or social background
- any other behaviour which makes the victim or other people around them feel frightened, unhappy or isolated

This list is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours that could impact negatively on a child's wellbeing.

It is crucial to take into account the impact that bullying behaviour has on a child or young person. The impact an incident has on a child or young person is more important than whether it is classified as bullying. Actions can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration. The person who has experienced harm may have experienced just one event. The impact determines the definition of bullying. One incident is sufficient to alert adults to take supportive action.

Homophobic bullying is bullying that is based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about, or behaviours towards, lesbian or gay people. Homophobic bullying can also include denying somebody's lesbian or gay identity or refusing to accept it. Homophobic bullying may be targeted at children or young people who are, or who are perceived to be, lesbian or gay. It can also suggest that someone or something is less worthy because they are lesbian or gay. Homophobic bullying can be targeted at children and young people who have lesbian or gay family members, and those who do not conform to gender stereotypes or are seen to be 'different' in some way, regardless of whether the person is actually lesbian or gay.

Biphobic bullying is bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about, or behaviours towards, bi people. This can also include denying somebody's bi identity or refusing to accept it. Biphobic bullying may be targeted at children and young people who are openly bi, those who are questioning their sexual orientation, or who are suspected of being bi. Biphobic bullying is also often targeted at children and young people who have bi family members. Biphobic bullying may target children and young people with negative stereotyping (for example suggesting that they are greedy) or imply that being bi is a phase.

Transphobic bullying is bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views or beliefs about, or behaviours towards, trans people, including non-binary people. This can also include denying somebody's gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobic bullying affects children and young people who are trans, including non-binary young people. It can also affect those who are questioning their gender identity as well as children or young people who are not trans but do not conform to gender stereotypes. Transphobic bullying can be directed towards pupils who are perceived to be transgender or non-binary. Transphobic bullying can also be targeted at children or young people who have trans or non-binary family members.

Not every unkind behaviour constitutes bullying. Children and young people are still learning how to get along with others. They will tease each other, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and disagree about what they like and don't like. These are examples of ordinary conflict, perhaps thoughtlessness and possibly insensitive behaviour and should be viewed as a normal part of growing up. However, if left unchecked, these behaviours can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feeling afraid, uncomfortable or unsafe in their environment. They should be viewed as an opportunity to help children and young people learn about resolving

conflict and getting along with others. Parents, teachers and other adults need to model kindness, conflict resolution, inclusion and responsibility.

Prevention of Bullying

Lenzie Academy promotes an ethos which allows pupils to achieve their potential in a safe and happy environment. We can support pupils using a variety of strategies including:

- Use of PSE to address and inform pupils of bullying type behaviours
- Increased monitoring by key staff
- Focus at Assemblies
- External speakers/theatre groups/police to deliver key messages
- Special anti-bullying initiatives
- An understanding of the impact and legal consequences of on-line bullying, supported by campus police, for the whole school community through the curriculum, assemblies and events for parents and carers
- Senior pupils trained in Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) and deliver lessons to BGE pupils through the PSE curriculum
- Restorative meetings
- Staff mentoring
- Pupil mentoring
- Individualised support
- Support group interventions eg resilience groups, self esteem

Response to Bullying

The member of staff to whom the incident is first reported, or who has witnessed the incident, should take the incident seriously. They must use their professional judgement in deciding upon appropriate action based on the impact of the bullying behaviour on the child or young person.

The child or young person who has experienced bullying behaviour will receive appropriate support and protection.

Examples of good practice include:

- the child or young person is taken to a comfortable place with no distractions;
- the child or young person is listened to;
- the member of staff should confirm that bullying is never acceptable; they deserve to feel safe;

- they should be gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken;
- they should be asked what they want to see happen next;
- the child or young person should be kept up to date with progress;
- details of the bullying behaviour and actions taken is recorded in the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module;
- relevant staff should inform parents of the incident and action taken, if it is judged to be appropriate.

In relation to the final bullet point, an example where it may not be appropriate to inform parents could include a transgender young person. The young person may not have told their family about their gender identity and inadvertent disclosure could cause needless stress for them or put them at risk. Confidentiality and privacy should be respected and disclosing information to parents or carers should only be done with consent of the young person. Further guidance can be accessed in the following link:

<https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/media/1344/supporting-transgender-young-people.pdf>

Interventions to Mitigate Anti-LGBT Behaviour

Various outcomes depending on the severity of the incident; the list below gives some examples of our practice, though this is continually evolving as part of whole-school and departmental development:

- All pupils who have displayed anti-LGBT behaviour are given work to undertake to educate them. E.g. resources from LGBT Youth Scotland such as the "SHH! Silence Helps Homophobia" learning resource.
- Whole-school work is undertaken through PSE.
- LGBT education is embedded across the whole-school curriculum, in terms of both marking key dates within the LGBT calendar and ensuring LGBT identities and orientations are represented in learning e.g. questions featuring same-sex couples.
- LGBT identities are visible across the school through posters, our website and Twitter page, as well as numerous LGBT titles in our library.
- In 2022 our school achieved Silver level of the LGBT Charter (LGBT Youth Scotland).

When a child or young person has displayed bullying behaviour, a member of the establishment's management team should, based on their professional judgement, endeavour to manage the resolution of the bullying incident within the school. Parents should be involved when their active support is needed to implement a resolution of the bullying incident.

However, 'where it is considered that in all circumstances to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and

discipline or the educational wellbeing of the pupils there' (national guidance on the prevention and management of exclusions, Included, Engaged and Involved-Part 2 (June 2017), senior managers have the power to exclude as a last resort.

Communicating Awareness

In order to tackle the issue of bullying it is essential that everyone within the community is aware that bullying is never acceptable and what action should be taken if they are subject to, or witness, what might be a bullying incident.

At Lenzie Academy we will:

- Provide a forum for discussion of bullying issues with key school staff (GSM)
- Apply guidelines as stated above
- Promote positive behaviour and respect
- Work with external agencies to reinforce key messages

To help raise awareness the anti-bullying committee will:

- Use Assembly to address behaviours
- Encourage use of a restorative approach
- Discuss areas of concerns with Pupil Councils
- Publicise key messages

It is essential that everyone takes responsibility in creating a safe and supportive environment within Lenzie Academy and we aim to achieve this by:

- Prevent bullying by taking a zero tolerance approach
- Promoting positive behaviour
- Show respect and compassion to all members of the school community and the surrounding environment
- Fostering an inclusive school
- Using school based systems to monitor and report concerns
- Providing a range of interventions/supports

Reporting Bullying Behaviour

If you are being bullied or witness someone else being bullied it is very important that you take action: ignoring it can often mean it will get worse.

Steps you can take include

- Never ignore bullying; always report bullying behaviour and help to stop it.
- Report incidents to an appropriate adult. This could include: Guidance Teachers, Year Heads, Class Teachers and/or parents and carers.
- Do not judge or isolate any parties involved in bullying. Show understanding and compassion for their situation.

What will we do when you tell us?

Steps we will take will include:

- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in the school environment.
- Support the pupils
- Investigate the concern
- Involve parents as appropriate
- All incidents of bullying, and the subsequent actions taken, will be logged by Guidance teacher the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Application.
- Provide interventions as required

We will encourage mediation which may involve:

- Restorative meeting/discussion
- Regular review with pupils
- Development of systems to support those involved
- **Review of Guidelines**

Guidelines will be subject to review 2024-25