



Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

1. Statement of Purpose

We recognise the problems associated with bullying and harassment of both children and adults and are committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently, and competently. Harassment and/or bullying of children or adults, including members of staff, is not acceptable under any circumstances. The focus of this policy is to promote good relationships and positive behaviours that engender mutual respect and esteem among staff, children, and parents.

Throughout this guidance the term 'parents' is used to include all main caregivers.

2. Definition of Bullying/Physical Behaviours and Harassment

"Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in."

"The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional, or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out." [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children & Young People](#)

2.1

Young children tend to be egocentric by nature and are still learning to appreciate the feelings of others and develop their sense of appropriate behaviours and fairness. It would be wrong to label every incident between children as bullying. The following definitions provide staff with descriptors which can be considered in each situation and will be useful in assessing allegations of bullying in the adult context also. **The impact an incident has had on a child is, however, more important than whether it is**

classified as bullying. Appropriate responses should be made by staff as set out in this policy.

2.2

Bullying/Physical Behaviours are the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person which causes pain and distress for the victim. Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which an individual or group of individuals feel threatened, abused or undermined by another individual or group of individuals.

2.3

Harassment is defined as any conduct which is unwanted by the recipient, or any such conduct based on the grounds of bias or discrimination that affects the dignity of any individual, or group of individuals at work. Harassment may be repetitive, or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals.

2.4

When is it not bullying behaviour?

It is important for children and young people to discuss how they feel and help them develop resilience to manage their relationships. We know that children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is a normal part of growing up and most children and young people are able to bounce back from this type of behaviour.

Early intervention and prevention are key elements of an approach focused on ensuring we get it right for all of our children and young people, as per [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People](#)

3. Complying with the Law

3.1

The [Equality Act 2010](#) makes it illegal to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their race or ethnicity, their disability, their gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion. Any behaviour that does not comply with the Act will be challenged and in the case of staff could lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked.

Our ELC setting is committed to upholding the principles of the Act, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil

partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. This policy addresses all forms of discrimination, including direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation

We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where equality and diversity are promoted, ensuring that everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

3.2

Bullying is a violation of children's rights and is incompatible with [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#).

- The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background (article 2)
- protection from violence, abuse and neglect (article 19)
- Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.(article 29)

3.3

[Scottish Social Services Council \(SSSC\) Codes of Practice](#)

These codes of practice describe the standards of conduct and practice within which both social services employers and workers should operate. The two codes for employers and workers are complementary and mirror the joint responsibilities of employers and workers in ensuring high standards. The revised SSSC Codes of Practice stipulates that:

- A social service **employer** must ensure workers understand bullying, harassment or any form of discrimination is not acceptable. They must promote a culture that value's everyone's safety and where violence, threats and abuse are not acceptable. They must have policies and procedure in place for reducing and managing such incidents. (Standard 4)
- A social service **worker** must **NOT** abuse, harm, neglect, exploit, discriminate against or cause unnecessary risk towards individuals, carers or colleagues. (Standard 6)

4. Forms of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment can take many forms – it may be emotional, physical, verbal, non-verbal, racist, sexual, homophobic or cyberbullying and staff should be alert to indicators that this may be happening. (See Appendix 1 for descriptors and indicators.)

5. Expectations

Within the setting, we aim to:

- Develop an inclusive and positive ethos and climate of respect, responsibility, and positive relationships, creating a culture where bullying and discrimination are unacceptable.
- Ensure our children and their parents have the skills and knowledge to prevent and respond appropriately to bullying.
- Ensure our children know who can help them and what support is available.
- Ensure all staff follow a consistent and coherent approach in preventing and responding to bullying from Early Learning and Childcare onwards.
- Provide regular training for staff to equip them with the latest strategies and knowledge to prevent and respond to bullying effectively.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy regularly to ensure it meets the needs of all service users.
- Include measures to prevent and respond to cyberbullying.

All service users will be made aware of this policy and expected to adhere to it.

6. Children

6.1

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly. Bullying should never be seen as a typical part of growing up. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where our child can thrive through curricular activities and daily routines, where, we will promote and reinforce positive behaviour, ensuring that all children are aware of acceptable codes of behaviour and staff expectations. Children will be made aware that they can approach any member of staff should an incident occur or if they feel intimidated or threatened in any way. Staff should always respond in a supportive and sensitive manner, trying to establish facts. Children should be enabled to talk about the incident and be confident it will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

6.2

If allegations are found to be true, staff should endeavour to establish why the bullying or harassment took place. They should encourage the child involved to appreciate how their actions have affected the other child. The child should also be made aware of the possible consequences of their actions, both for themselves and for others. It is not the purpose of this process to humiliate any child; therefore, they should be spoken to away from the group. The child accused of bullying should be invited to apologise for their actions, but this should not be forced. Additionally, staff should provide support to both the child affected by the bullying and the child who engaged in bullying to address underlying issues and promote positive behaviour moving forward.

6.3

Developing respect for others and acceptable behaviours is an integral part of the early years curriculum. Therefore, staff will not be required to inform parents every time a child is reminded of appropriate behaviour. However, staff will inform the parents of children involved in any incidents of bullying, explaining the actions taken. Their cooperation and support will be sought to prevent future incidents.

6.4

Incidences of bullying and harassment should be recorded and monitored and will contain the following information:

- Who was involved.
- Where and when the bullying took place.
- Any identified aspects of discrimination underlying the bullying.
- Action taken or resolution at an individual organisational level.
- Consideration of personal or additional support needs.
- Confidentiality of records and sharing with relevant parties.

In serious cases and when bullying persists, the manager will work with the child's parents to try to resolve the situation. This may include agreeing sanctions should incidents continue. In a very small number of children, where challenging behaviour persists and gives cause for concern, consideration may be given, in consultation with the parents, to referring the child to a specialist such as a child psychologist. Follow-up actions will be taken to ensure the effectiveness of the resolution and support provided. We will ensure every child and young person who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available.

7. Staff

7.1

Staff are expected to model behaviour that promotes health and wellbeing and to promote the setting's development of a positive ethos. Observations of children's behaviour are crucial in determining whether bullying and harassment is taking place and in helping to prevent it. It is our fundamental role to ensure that all of us working with children and young people fulfil our responsibility to support their health and wellbeing. This can be achieved through embedding positive relationships and behaviour approaches to prevent bullying in and across our learning environment. (As per the terms of ["Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children & Young People"](#))

7.2

Staff are expected to abide by the SSSC's codes of practice (set out above) and have a responsibility to make themselves aware of the contents of this and other related policies. Management will provide training and awareness raising related to these policies. Staff also have responsibilities noted within the Whistleblowing Policy to report any concerns of malpractice or wrongdoing by other members of staff. This would include any instances of bullying and harassment of colleagues or children.

7.3

Any incidences of bullying and harassment of staff by other members of staff, including management, or by parents, will be fully investigated. Staff should have confidence that any concerns they bring will be listened to sympathetically and resolution sought. Concerns should be reported directly to the manager, but where the accusation involves the manager, then another staff member (usually a senior manager / member of the management committee / setting owner) should be contacted.

7.4

Where possible, informal resolutions will be sought and agreed between the parties concerned. If, however, this is not possible due to the seriousness of the incident(s), then staff can raise a grievance, or disciplinary action may need to be taken. Where bullying of a child by an adult is proven, disciplinary action will ensue. Any disciplinary action taken against a member of staff requires to be reported to the Care Inspectorate.

7.5

Should a member of staff feel that a pattern of bullying or harassment towards them is emerging, they should keep a personal record of any incidents that they may need to

refer to in a future complaint with details of date, time, place, persons involved and any witnesses.

8. Parents

8.1

Parents will be informed of the setting's Anti-Bullying and Harassment and Promoting Positive Behaviour policies when they enrol their child. Reminders of these policies will be made available to parents throughout their child's time in the setting, and generally at their request. Parents' support will be sought in promoting the positive ethos of the setting and in dealing with incidents related to their child.

8.2

Where a child is displaying continuing behavioural problems, we will endeavour to work closely with the parents, involving them in any decisions made and seeking their support for a consistency of approach both within the setting and at home.

We will reflect [*GIRFEC and the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators*](#) at all times.

A range of experiences can have negative effects on young people. This might be one of the 10 recognised Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) or other adversities such as bereavement or bullying, or where a family is affected by illness, disability or poverty. Each child should be helped to reach their full potential as an individual.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of _____ (*insert the name of the person designated e.g. Depute/Team Leader/Senior/Manager*) to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. This policy should also be brought to the attention of all parents, visiting professionals and any other individuals accessing the setting. The responsibility of all to adhere to the policy should be highlighted. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy will be achieved through review of any incident records and feedback from parents and staff.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Forms and Indicators of Bullying and Harassment

See also:

Whistleblowing Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

Safe Recruitment Policy

Complaints Policy

GDPR Member Privacy Policy

Links to national policy:

Please refer to the EYS Early Years External guidance glossary which can be found within MyEYS for the most up to date links.

The purpose of this Early Years External Guidance Glossary is to offer a comprehensive collection of links and documents from external organisations. These resources form the foundation of the policies and procedures used within your ELC setting

Find out more:

Bullying and Harassment information – ACAS

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1864>

Education Scotland Preventing and Responding to Bullying

<https://education.gov.scot/resources/bullying/responding-to-bullying/>

National Bullying Helpline

<https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/about.html>

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy - Appendix 1

Forms of Bullying/Physical Behaviours

There are several main forms of bullying:

- Emotional - Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation
- Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, pinching, violence, threats, belongings taken/damaged
- Verbal - Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, put down, threatened,
- Racist - Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - Unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Mobile/Internet (Cyberbullying) - Abusive e-mails, telephone calls, text messages, sharing of pictures/images.

Forms of Harassment

- Physical - Contact, assault or gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour
- Verbal - Unwelcome remarks, suggestions, and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter
- Non-verbal - Offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion from social activities,
- Bullying - Persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour. Abuse of power or unfair sanctions that:

- Make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated, vulnerable, not in control of themselves or their lives
- Undermine an individual's self confidence
- May cause an individual to suffer stress.

Recognition of Bullying

The following list highlights some of the indicators of bullying that a child might display. Just because a child is displaying some of these signs or behaviours, that does not necessarily mean that the child is being bullied. These signs could indicate that the child has other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility.

- Unwillingness to attend group
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour
- Refuses to talk about the problem
- Easily distressed
- Lacking confidence, low self-esteem, anxious
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive and unreasonable
- Begins to bully other children
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns, stomach upset
- Starts stammering
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises.

Within pre-school groups the most common forms of bullying are biting, hitting, pushing, kicking, and ridiculing by adults. Biting is often a cry for attention by a child who is feeling abandoned, frustrated or afraid. Children whose language is not yet fluent or finding themselves in a situation where they cannot do things very effectively, may well bite or hit out, as they are full of feelings that threaten to overwhelm them.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying can have both long and short-term effects on children and young people's mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. It can affect their participation, attainment and inclusion, and can have an adverse and detrimental effect on childhood development, self-esteem, confidence and future potential.

Bullying can impact on a person's capacity for self-management, their internal feelings of control and their ability to take effective action. Being bullied is traumatic for the individual and may lead to a range of often unhelpful coping mechanisms and behaviours, such as self-blame or physical and verbal aggression.

The impact of bullying behaviour can extend far beyond the individuals directly involved. Other children and young people who witness incidents may be impacted as well as incidents having a broader impact on the culture of a setting. Impacts can also be felt within families and other relationships.

The actual behaviour does not always need to be repeated for it to have an ongoing impact. The fear of behaviour recurring may have a lasting impact.