



Anti-Bullying policy



Alva Academy

“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 for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People. 2017)

“Our Vision is that Clackmannanshire is a place where all children and young people have high aspirations and a bright positive future ahead of them. They should leave education skilled and well prepared for life, work and future learning. We will work to minimise the effects of child poverty and raise attainment for all. Excellence and equity will be the norm.”
(Clackmannanshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022)

Alva Academy supports “The Clackmannanshire Way” which is that all learners in establishments will;

- Be surrounded by adults who know, care for, respect and listen to them.
- Be supported by adults that have the skills and abilities to help them be the best they can be.
- Have learning spaces that make them feel safe, included and supported....

Alva Academy / Clackmannanshire Council regards any bullying as a Health and Wellbeing issue for our children, young people and their families

Alva Academy takes consideration of the protected characteristics which underpin the Equality Act (2010) such as disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion & belief, sex and sexual orientation when developing and implementing a policy

The purpose of this particular policy is to support our vision and, through effective implementation, aim to ensure that;

- every child and young person in Alva Academy will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults
- children and young people and their parent(s)/carers, will have the skills, confidence and resilience to prevent and/or respond to bullying appropriately
- every child and young person in Alva Academy who requires help will know who can help them and what support is available
- adults working in Alva Academy with children and young people, will follow a consistent and coherent approach in preventing and responding to bullying.

The Policy Landscape

This policy is firmly rooted in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child (UNCRC) most notably Articles 3,12,13,19,28,29,39

Several local and national drivers support this policy, including:

- The National Improvement Framework
- Curriculum for Excellence
- How Good is our School 4 (HGIOS4)
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
- Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Happy, Safe & Achieving their Potential 2005
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Scotland Act 1998
- The Early Years Framework
- Regulation of Care Act 2000

- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Clackmannanshire HWB Strategy 2017-2022
- Professional Standards and Values

Definition of Bullying Behaviour

In line with the Scottish Government and respectme - Scotland's Anti- Bullying Service - bullying is defined as,

‘a mixture of behaviours and impacts which can impact on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of ‘agency. Bullying behaviour takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out both online and offline’.

(Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People. 2017)

Bullying behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you both online and in the real world
- Receiving abusive messages on social media or electronic communication
- Behaviour which causes people to feel like they are not in control of themselves
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be

“This behaviour can harm people physically and/or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these. Bullying is both behaviour and impact.”

(Respect for All - The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People. 2017)

Every bullying incident should be looked at individually. In some cases, children or young people may not be aware that their behaviour is actually bullying. They are perhaps modelling the behaviour of adults or other children and young people, not understanding that it is wrong because they have never been taught otherwise. In these circumstances, the intent to bully may not be present, but the impact and effect on the person being bullied will be no less severe because of this. It must be explained to the person bullying that their behaviour is unacceptable and why. Intent is difficult to prove and young people can often reframe their behaviour when challenged. It is more important to focus on the behaviour and the impact it had, rather than trying to establish whether someone acted deliberately or not.

Online Bullying

For children and young people, online environments are social spaces where they can hang out and meet friends. Like any other place they visit, there are benefits and risks. Adults need to be engaged with children and young people about where they go online, just as they are when they go into town or to any other ‘real’ physical place.

Online bullying, or 'cyberbullying' as it is often referred to, should not be treated any differently; it's still about behaviour and impact. The behaviour is the same but it takes place online, usually on social networking sites and online gaming platforms, and can include a person being called names, threatened or having rumours spread about them

"Our responses will be more consistent and effective when we address online bullying as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy."
(Respect for All : The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People. 2017)

Prejudice Based Bullying

Bullying behaviour may be the result of prejudice-based views, beliefs and fears, leading to the dislike of and hatred of individuals. This is known as prejudice-based bullying. This bullying can be based on any characteristic unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance. At Alva Academy, we will aim to address the root cause of prejudice as well as effectively responding to incidents as they arise, creating an environment where diversity is celebrated and name calling and comments based on prejudice are challenged. Some personal characteristics are protected within the law, to address the years of unfavourable treatment experienced by some groups. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a 'protected characteristic'

The protected characteristics are;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Research recommends that only by explicitly embedding consideration of all protected characteristics across learning will children, young people and the adults who work with them have the language, understanding and confidence to respond to prejudice-based bullying effectively.

As well as dealing with individual incidents of bullying, it is important that we develop a learning environment where the values of diversity, inclusion and respect are universally applied to all learners and their families

When it is not Bullying?

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 have the ability to bounce back from this type of behaviour. It is important to discuss how they feel and help them to develop resilience to manage their relationships. Similarly, bullying behaviour can sometimes be unsuccessful. A person can attempt to bully someone using a range of behaviours but it has no impact – in this case the person has not been bullied but the behaviour needs to be challenged appropriately and should not be ignored. For example, the use of homophobic or derogatory language, which may have no impact on the person it is aimed at, must still be challenged as the language itself is unacceptable and could impact on other people.

On the other hand, incidents can be perceived as bullying when they are more serious and are, in fact, criminal in nature. It is important to ensure that there is a clear distinction between bullying and other potential forms of criminal offences such as hate crime, child sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. For instance, when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying. This is sexual assault or abuse and a form of gender-based violence. There are laws to protect children and young people from this very serious type of behaviour.

Similarly, hate crime is defined in law as a crime motivated by malice or ill-will towards individuals because of their actual or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity. A hate crime can take a number of forms that are potentially a form of criminal harassment and should be treated as such. Adults and children and young people can seek appropriate advice and guidance from respectme and Police Scotland if they feel a hate crime may have taken place

Approaches to Preventing Bullying

Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. Promoting respectful relationships, repairing relationships where appropriate, and ensuring we respond to all forms of prejudice will help create an environment where bullying cannot thrive.

There are a range of strategies and programmes that can improve relationships and behaviour, promote equality and challenge inequality, and develop emotional well-being to help prevent and address bullying.

Readiness for Learning (R4L) is an approach being implemented within Alva Academy which focuses on ensuring that children have the core developmental skills and experiences necessary for them to make appropriate progress through the National Curriculum by ensuring that all developmental milestones of social and emotional learning are met. It is intended to support all children and young people, as everyone experiences Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) or stressors at some point in their education. How the brain manages stress is a normal biological process and we all need to feel safe at these most challenging times in our development. It is based on helping all children and young people to regulate – or ‘manage’ – their brains at times of stress to help them feel safe, settled and ‘ready to learn’. The approach is about using the best practice from Attachment Theory, Nurture Principles, Trauma-Informed Approaches and Neurosequential Model to help children and young people become the best learners they can and achieve the best possible outcomes.

Ensuring that pupils have the age-appropriate social and emotional skills means that they are then more likely to be able to learn about their rights and to be responsible when it comes to anti-bullying. R4L further supports anti-bullying best practice by also providing educators with tools and support to explore what might be going on for the person displaying the bullying behaviour, through the application of the Nurture Principles, namely ‘all behaviour is communication’.

The development of strong, healthy relationships is fundamental to the R4L approach. Relational health (the number of healthy relationships you have) is a protective factor across the lifespan. Supporting and teaching learners how to develop these relationships is key to both the work of R4L and anti-bullying best practice.

Further information on the R4L approach can be found in the Clackmannanshire Council 'Boosting Brains, Boosting Learning' paper.

Examples of some of the strategies and programmes used in Alva Academy:-

- Readiness 4 Learning (R4L)
- Mentoring and peer support including Mentors in Violence Prevention and MCR Pathways Relationship Based Mentoring Programme
- Recognising and Realising Children's Rights
- Rights Respecting Schools
- Restorative Approaches
- Creating Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments
- Solution Oriented Approaches

These are all supported by opportunities for Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) for staff.

Children and young people value choice when responding to bullying. They need to explore a range of options that may suit them, as what works for one person may not work for another. Adults can and should support children and young people to make informed choices about how to respond to bullying.

Involving parents and carers

A key group of Alva Academy stakeholders are parents and carers, who have a right to be included and consulted on the establishment anti bullying policy. The principles of involving parents and carers are set out in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. Parents and carers can be key partners in supporting how bullying is challenged, prevented and responded to.

It is important for parents to recognise that Alva Academy does not employ a punitive system of response to bullying incidents and that exclusion is a last resort.

"The Clackmannanshire Way" is to achieve excellence and equity for all built on mutual trust, cooperation and highly effective communication".

Approaches to monitoring and recording take into consideration the following children and young people's rights outlined in the UNCRC

Article 12 – children and young people have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously

Article 16 – children and young people have a right to a private life.

Alva Academy will endeavour to communicate effectively with parents/carers about incidents of bullying behaviour, while also respecting pupils' expressed preference for confidentiality in certain circumstances.

Parents and carers will be able to access Local Authority policies and individual school policies online.

The following outlines the expectations of everyone in preventing and managing bullying as well as what we can expect from others.

Our policies and procedures aim to support and ensure the following –

The involvement of children and young people, staff, parents and partners (stakeholders) in a meaningful process to develop and support the anti-bullying policy

All stakeholders understand the culture and values in relation to respect for all and children's and young people's rights

All stakeholders take responsibility for their own behaviour in line with the school culture and values

All stakeholders understand the need to challenge prejudice-based bullying and that it will not be tolerated

All stakeholders should know about the school's anti-bullying policy

All stakeholders understand their responsibility to report bullying, what ways they can report it, and understand what will happen next including any escalation process

Alva Academy works with other agencies and community initiatives to challenge bullying behaviour and to promote rights and responsibilities

Alva Academy uses the curriculum to actively explore and address issues of bullying, discrimination and children and young people's rights

Alva Academy aims to offer a variety of ways for children and young people to report bullying or to talk about any concerns they have in confidence

All staff are provided with appropriate professional learning to understand what bullying is and their role in dealing with it appropriately

The needs of all those involved in bullying behaviour, either expressing it or on the receiving end, are taken into account in any action to address the incident, including taking account of the impact of the incident as well as any underlying prejudice or negative attitudes

All staff are aware of their responsibilities to deal with reports of bullying and follow a consistent process

Parents and carers who have concerns about incidents of bullying behaviour are encouraged to report these as early as possible with a member of school staff

Alva Academy aims to communicate effectively with parents/carers about incidents of bullying behaviour, while also respecting pupils' expressed preference for confidentiality in certain circumstances

If the action taken does not resolve the bullying, and a parent complains, this will be treated as per the Council's complaints procedures – advice will be sought from an Improving Outcomes Manager once all other avenues to find a resolution have been explored

Recording and Monitoring Bullying Incidents

Alva Academy will keep records of any reporting of bullying behaviour including details of any associated correspondence or communication, actions taken and outcomes – this will be recorded on the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module and monitored regularly. These records should take into consideration -

- Who reported or witnessed the incident
- The children and young people involved as well as staff or other adults
- Where and when bullying has taken place
- The type of bullying experienced e.g. name calling, rumours, threats etc.
- Any underlying prejudice, including details of any protected characteristics
- Consideration of personal or additional support needs and well-being concerns
- Whether parents were informed (if the child or young person has been consulted and involved in the decision) and if parents are involved in any resolution action
- Actions taken including resolution at an individual or school level

Information should not be used in isolation - the child or young person's circumstances, professional judgement and other relevant circumstances should be taken into account. Recording systems gather information on any underlying prejudice including details related to any protected characteristic(s). If the incident was motivated, or was perceived to be motivated by prejudice by any other party, including witnesses and school staff, this should also be recorded.

Appendix One

Strategies to Address Bullying Behaviour

The following indicators of good practice are offered as a basis from which we may develop or review our anti-bullying policy. While it is not expected that Alva Academy will incorporate all of the aspects below, the indicators offer a practical framework that can inform this policy.

Setting the right ethos –

Alva Academy:

- gives clear, explicit and consistent messages that bullying is unacceptable
- involves children, young people, staff, parents and partners in discussing, agreeing and taking action on bullying, e.g. an anti-bullying working group, the health & wellbeing working group, pupil and class councils, Parent Council, CLPL
- reviews school practice and organisation to identify any aspects which might allow or encourage bullying e.g. self evaluation tool, Policy Through To Practice
- ensures that the distribution and use of power by adults does not model bullying
- provides appropriate staff and curriculum development

Encouraging the reporting of bullying behaviour –

Alva Academy

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- has an open complaints procedure for children, young people and parents/carers
- actively encourages children and young people to report bullying behaviour
- provides a range of opportunities for children and young people to communicate concerns about bullying
- designates time for class or group discussion about bullying

Raising awareness –

Alva Academy:

- uses relevant groups e.g. health and well-being, to promote anti-bullying
- surveys opinions on/experience of bullying from children, young people and staff
- displays children's and young people's anti-bullying posters
- discusses bullying as part of primary/secondary liaison
- involves older pupils and/or outside speakers in talking to pupils about bullying and discriminatory behaviour
- features bullying as an issue at assemblies and through newsletters/website

Linking the formal and informal curriculum –

Alva Academy:

- identifies curricular opportunities to discuss feelings/experiences of bullying behaviour, including explorations of prejudice and injustice
- promotes a positive ethos of respect throughout the curriculum
- encourages approaches in sport that emphasise co-operation and participation as well as winning

Supporting those involved in bullying behaviour –

Alva Academy:

- reassures children and young people that bullying is never acceptable
- creates systems for early identification of vulnerable children and young people
- acknowledges the distress of a bullied child or young person
- provides advice and support as appropriate
- provides opportunities for friendship formation through, for example, buddying both in class and at break times, opportunities for older pupils to support younger pupils who are being bullied

Supporting those who might see bullying behaviour –

Alva Academy:

- encourages all children and young people to recognise that others can play an active part in challenging bullying behaviour when it is safe for them to do so.
- actively recognises and values those who support others
- encourages the natural leaders amongst children and young people to set a positive climate in the classroom, playground and social spaces
- channels the natural empathy most children and young people have for those who are bullied and those who bully others.

Changing the bullying behaviour –

Alva Academy:

- holds pupils who bully accountable for their behaviour and supports them in changing that behaviour, e.g. using mediation, restorative practices etc
- develops consequences which encourage children and young people who bully to think about their misbehaviour and its impact on others and on themselves
- helps children and young people to communicate effectively in conflict situations

Dealing with problem areas and times –

Alva Academy:

- offers training/support to support staff to enhance their skills, status and confidence
- identifies sources and locations of problems and ensures closer monitoring of these, e.g. lunchtime queues, toilets
- involves children and young people in seeking solutions
- improves the amount or the nature of supervision at break times
- ensures flexibility when and where appropriate, this should be a temporary solution; e.g. considers staggering or reducing break times
- provides a range of activities at lunchtime e.g. clubs, supervised play

The communication of anti-bullying policy –

Alva Academy:

- makes it clear how the anti-bullying strategy relates to other policies
- ensures that children, young people and their parent/carers know what to do and

what to expect if they are bullied, or if they witness or express bullying behaviour

- refers to the anti-bullying policy using a range of mediums e.g school website, handbook, Facebook or Twitter
- takes a whole school approach, also ensuring that there are designated staff with clear roles and responsibilities in relation to the anti-bullying strategy

Monitoring and evaluation –

Alva Academy:

- identifies how the strategy's effectiveness will be monitored and evaluated
- has a systematic approach to checking and analysing bullying incidents
- ensures that staff, parents, carers, children and young people are involved in reviewing and evaluating the anti-bullying strategy

Assigning and sharing responsibilities –

The Head-teacher or designated member of the SLT will endeavour to:

- lead Alva Academy's commitment to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying
- ensure that children, young people, staff and parents can be actively involved in developing and monitoring the anti-bullying policy & procedures
- consider appointing a co-ordinator to (i) maintain the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module of bullying incidents and related actions and (ii) monitor the overall effectiveness of the policy and procedures
- ensure the involvement of partner agencies where appropriate
- ensure appropriate curricular focus throughout the year, e.g. linking to health and well-being or the promotion of equality, through focussed assemblies or 'weeks'
- offer information and resources on bullying issues to parents and carers

Teaching staff will endeavour to:

- assess each incident carefully, investigate and record relevant data as per the policy
- be good listeners and support children and young people in talking about bullying
- engage respectfully and role-model behaviours
- ensure appropriate curricular focus e.g. health and wellbeing, anti-bullying week, assemblies involving children and young people
- be alert to any change of attitude or relationships between children and young people
- try to recognise vulnerable individuals and work to raise their self-esteem and confidence
- record and report incidents and their resolution in the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module,
- keep a record of any on-going concerns

Support staff will endeavour to:

- be alert to and engage with isolated children and young people in class and outside
- inform teaching staff/SMT of children and young people who appear to be isolated
- be good listeners and support children and young people in talking about bullying
- keep a watchful eye on 'rough and tumble' to ensure that everyone is enjoying it
- be aware of/check areas where children and young people are vulnerable
- never ignore aggressive or bullying behaviour
- report bullying incidents to the relevant member of staff

Children and young people are encouraged to:

- take responsibility for their own behaviour
- report bullying incidents they have experienced or witnessed to a member of staff
- take part in curricular work and experiences to learn about, and to challenge bullying
- develop an understanding of prejudice based bullying and how to challenge it
- work within class groups and/or pupil councils to support the anti-bullying policy

Parents and carers are asked to:

- communicate concerns about bullying quickly to the establishment
- support the establishment in its efforts to challenge bullying behaviour
- encourage children and young people to share worries about bullying with staff
- talk to their child and discuss how they would like each situation handled – help the child or young person feel they are gaining some control of the situation
- engage respectfully and role model behaviours

Appendix Two

When should bullying incidents be recorded?

Once an incident has been raised, this should be logged on SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities Module as soon as possible, in accordance with advice on recording and monitoring personal data – ideally within three working days.

An investigation into the incident should follow and SEEMiS should be updated throughout the process.

Once concluded, the incident(s) should be closed off. Where an incident is found to be bullying, Alva Academy will aim to ensure that appropriate supports/interventions are in place for individuals/groups to address any underlying prejudice.

School staff should aim to consider the following:

- What was the behaviour?
- What is the impact on the school environment, learning or health and wellbeing?
- What does the child/young person(s) want to happen?
- What do I need to do?
- Is there evidence of any prejudice-based attitudes or behaviour?

Impact on the individual/group's health and well-being and/or learning and school environment can be established through an investigation of alleged, observed or reported bullying incidents.

The impact of an incident on wellbeing can be considered through the eight GIRFEC indicators: safe, healthy, achieving, nurturing, active, respected, responsible and included (SHANARRI)

