



SGOIL LIONACLEIT

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS POLICY



Contents

Introduction	3
Policy Aims.....	3
Background & Guiding Principles	4
Philosophy	5
Positive Behaviour Expectations	6
Responding when behaviour falls below expectations	7
<i>Restorative Approaches</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Merits System</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Behaviour Related Consequences</i>	<i>8</i>
Dealing with Reports and Incidents of Bullying	9
<i>Definition of Bullying</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Further considerations</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Key Legislation and Policies.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Guidance for young people on reporting a concern about bullying</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Guidance for parents on reporting a concern about bullying.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Recording Bullying Incidents</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Information on how this policy will be shared with all stakeholders, including parents/carers and young people</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>How we will continue to raise awareness of the policy and of approaches to tackling bullying through the curriculum and other programmes.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Guidance for Staff.....</i>	<i>12</i>
Appendix 1 - Behaviour - Standards and Expectations	13
Appendix 2 - Promoting Positive Behaviour - School Merits System	15
Appendix 3 - Responding When Behaviour Falls Below Expectation.....	16
Appendix 4 - Responding to Reports and Incidents of Bullying.....	17
Appendix 5 - Anti-Bullying Flow Chart	20
Appendix 6 - Prejudice-Based Bullying	21
Appendix 7 – Bullying on Social Media	23
Appendix 8 - Useful Links and Resources	24
Appendix 9 – Sharing This Policy with All Stakeholders	24

Promoting Positive Relationships at Sgoil Lionacleit

Introduction

Positive relationships and the wellbeing of all are at the heart of what we do at Sgoil Lionacleit. We provide a learning environment where pupils and staff can feel safe, valued, and supported. This is reflected in our school aims. We strive to ensure all young people and staff:

Work together to inspire a sense of pride, community and ownership. Support each other to become resilient, confident and articulate. Work cooperatively to engage in meaningful learning.

Policy Aims

This policy promotes and supports the vision, values, and aims of the school and specifically aims to:

- State our commitment as a school to supporting and protecting the rights of young people in an inclusive and nurturing environment at Sgoil Lionacleit.
- Make clear that any form of bullying is a breach of young people's rights and has no place in our school community.
- Provide clarity of expectations and consistency of approach around promoting positive behaviour, mutual respect and restorative practices when behaviour falls below our expectations.
- Improve outcomes for learners and support the wellbeing of all.



Background & Guiding Principles

This policy framework has taken cognisance of national and local contexts and policies and has been developed in line with evidence-based research and best practice.

It follows the guidelines set out in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Promoting Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy, and accounts for key, current policy drivers such as Getting it Right for Every Child Policy Statement (2022), UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (2017), Scottish Government's Included, Engaged & Involved document (2019) and Education Scotland's Restorative Approaches to Support Positive Relationships and Behaviour (2021).

In the writing of this policy, we have carefully considered our guiding principles. These are defined below.

Wellbeing

It is essential that the whole school community has a shared understanding of wellbeing and the dignity and worth of every individual. This promotes a culture and ethos of positive relationships.

Inclusion

Inclusion is everyone's responsibility. Inclusion happens when educational settings create environments that meet the diverse needs of all learners, through personalised learning and support that takes account of individual needs, choices, and circumstances. An inclusive and positive ethos which is embedded across the whole school community enables positive relationships to thrive. Inclusion entails children and young people being present, participating, achieving, and being supported.

Equality and Equity

Education settings that promote equality treat individuals fairly, value and celebrate diversity and challenge all forms of discrimination. Equity in education ensures that each child and young person is given the right support, at the right time, in the right place to achieve their full potential.

Children's Rights

Promoting positive relationships and behaviour is underpinned by a rights-based approach. Getting it Right for Every Child and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires every practitioner to familiarise themselves with and take account of the UNCRC, which has been incorporated into Scots Law (2024), in their day-to-day practice.

Philosophy

At Sgoil Lionacleit, our shared values are integrity, ambition and perseverance. These values must be at the heart of every interaction between every member of the school community.

We believe that positive relationships, effective learning and teaching, and positive behaviours are interlinked and are vital to us in fulfilling our aims and upholding our values as a school community. We believe this is key in allowing all our young people to be

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Effective Contributors
- Responsible Citizens

From the wealth of research that exists, we know that positive relationships and behaviour are at the core of effective learning and teaching and the development of the wellbeing of the whole child. Strong, reciprocal relationships, those with high expectations and clear and consistent boundaries, matter most in terms of pupils' achievements and self-belief.

The relationships that benefit children and young people most of all are those which recognise that all behaviour is communication. The guiding principles of nurture help us to take a holistic approach to the child or young person which consolidates the approach to wellbeing in Getting it Right for Every Child.

Relationship based approaches when thoroughly understood and implemented lead to:

- Improved behaviour
- Improved attendance
- Greater academic attainment
- Reduced exclusions
- Improved relationships with staff and community
- Improved resilience
- Improved long term outcomes

Whilst evidence demonstrates that this approach is of benefit to all children and young people, it is especially beneficial to those who have experienced adversity and trauma in their lives.

Research into Adverse Childhood Experiences indicates that a relationship with a trusted adult can mitigate the detrimental impact of these experiences. We strive to ensure that all children and young people are included, engaged, and involved by creating opportunities and building skills to develop positive relationships.

Incorporating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



Positive Behaviour Expectations

Sgoil Lionacleit is committed to providing the best possible learning experience for our young people. Some key elements of learners' experiences are highlighted below.

Learners will experience:

- A positive, respectful, nurturing and inclusive learning environment with well-paced routines, and structure.
- High and appropriate expectations for achievement based on their skills, abilities, interests and needs.
- Engaging, purposeful and consistently high-quality learning and teaching in line with the school Curriculum Rationale and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework.
- Motivation, support, and challenge in their learning and in their behaviour, appropriate to individual abilities and needs (including any Additional Support Needs).
- Encouragement and support to facilitate nurturing relationships, develop pupils as resilient individuals with personal responsibility and provide them with wider achievement and leadership opportunities.
- Encouragement and support to foster integrity, to be ambitious and to persevere.
- Feedback, recognition, and praise.
- An understanding of and adherence to their rights as young people (in respect of the UNCRC).

We expect all members of the school community to uphold mutual respect for one another. We expect that young people conduct themselves with integrity and respect the rights of all others in the school community. We expect that young people support a safe, respectful, and welcoming school environment for all which allows others to learn and flourish. Some aspects of positive behaviour are to:

- Respect the rights of all others in the school community
- Respect the school environment
- Act in an appropriate, safe and non-threatening manner
- Show empathy and compassion for others
- Be respectful, thoughtful and helpful
- Do the work that is required
- Strive to succeed

More information on the school's standards and expectations can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Responding when behaviour falls below expectations

Restorative Approaches

Sgoil Lionacleit uses restorative approaches when there is a need to de-escalate, resolve or repair. In all instances, it is hugely important that staff model compassion and empathy when dealing with young people's behaviour.

When a young person's behaviour falls short of our expectations and this has a negative impact on others, themselves, or the school environment, it is important for us to focus on learning from the situation and repairing any harm caused.

Restorative approaches promote accountability and give young people an opportunity to hear about, and face up to any harm and distress that they have caused others. This in turn encourages young people to be responsible citizens and to try to avoid any repeat of their actions. These approaches are designed to help restore and strengthen relationships.

Restorative approaches used at Sgoil Lionacleit are varied and take account of the needs of individuals, as well as any mitigating circumstances. In best practice, an initial approach will follow this course of thought and discussion.

- What is happening? (actual actions and possible thoughts and feelings)
- Who is being affected and how?
- What does each person involved need?
- What do we need to do next to make things better?

We are very aware that behaviour is very often a form of communication, and there are many factors in young people's lives which impact how they behave at school and towards others. Here are some of the varied restorative approaches.

- Reflective discussion (as above).
- Classroom Observation (assessing the situation to look for ways of improving things).
- Behaviour Monitoring Card (a class by class reminder and target for improved behaviour). See **Appendix 6**.
- Restorative meetings (a chance to talk about what has happened, express points of view and repair relationships).
- Mentoring (regular meetings with a chosen member of staff or senior pupil to discuss how things are going).
- Behaviour Related Consequences (sometimes there is a need for timeout from class or a detention. More detail on the next page.)
- Counselling (meetings with a school counsellor or well-being worker are offered to help young people deal with emotions and challenges).
- Written agreement on expected behaviour (signed by young person and parents/guardians).

Merits System

As part of promoting positive behaviour, Sgoil Lionacleit operates a merits system which is directly linked to school house points. Pupils are encouraged to do their best to behave positively and apply themselves to their work in class with the incentive of gaining points for their house group and gaining certificates of merit throughout the school session. Details on how our merit system works can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Behaviour Related Consequences

When consequences need to be applied to pupils, they should be logical, related to the situation, have a focus on learning, and should take into consideration the needs and capacity of those involved. This will mean responses will vary for individuals based on their needs. The approach, however, remains consistent – focusing on repairing the harm caused, preventing it happening again, and returning to and refocusing on learning as quickly as possible.

In practical terms when there is a need to apply consequences such as a short-term removal from class or detention, the aim is for them to be:

- **Related** to the behaviour
- **Respectful** in the way they are communicated and enforced
- **Reasonable**, proportionate, and developmentally appropriate

More details on how we manage incidents of behaviour which falls beneath our expectations can be found in **Appendix 3**.



Dealing with Reports and Incidents of Bullying

Bullying behaviour is a breach of young peoples' rights and is never acceptable at Sgoil Lionacleit.

The act of bullying is a direct breach of other people's rights. All young people should expect to feel valued, respected, safe and free from bullying behaviour. This policy establishes a set of guidelines for staff, pupils and parents.

Definition of Bullying

The organisation 'respectme' is Scotland's anti-bullying service. They define bullying as:

"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."
(respectme, 2015)

Further considerations

- There does not need to be intent.
- This behaviour does not need to be persistent, but the threat can be sustained.
- Bullying is behaviour and impact – never one on its own.
- Bullying occurs within the context of relationships.
- Bullying can be verbal, social, physical, emotional or prejudice based.
- It is best to avoid labelling and using terms such as 'bully' and 'victim.'

Key Legislation and Policies

This policy is set within a number of local and national strategies and legislation, as set out below:

1. The Human Rights Act 1998

- Places a public duty on authorities to carry out their functions in a matter that is compatible with the right to life, the prohibition of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to respect for private and family life, the right to education.

2. UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024

- Is concerned with upholding of the rights of children and young people by law in Scotland - a number of articles are relevant to this act.
- [Article 3](#) – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect them.
- [Article 12](#) – Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.
- [Article 19](#) - Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

- Article 29 – Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
- Sgoil Lionacleit promotes the Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA). We currently hold our Silver Award and are working towards our Gold Award. RRSA promotes the values and principles of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and supports an ethos of meaningful pupil participation, respect and positive relationships.

3. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- The protected characteristics are:-
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Sex (Gender)
 - Gender reassignment (Transgender)
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation

4. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009

- Provides the legal framework underpinning the system for supporting children and young people who have additional support needs. Children or young people may require additional support for a variety of reasons and may include those who are bullied at school. These needs can be temporary or transient.

5. Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006

- Promotes the future involvement of parents in their children’s education and in the development plans for schools. This act puts a responsibility on schools, family and communities to address discrimination with a duty to actively promote equality and promote children’s health, wellbeing and development.

6. The Children and Young People's Act (Scotland) 2014 places GIRFEC – Getting It Right For Every Child - in statute

- GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people underpinned by shared principles and values in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is about how practitioners across all services for children and adults meet the needs of children and young people, working together where necessary to ensure they reach their full potential. It promotes a shared approach and accountability that:
- Builds solutions with and around children, young people and families.
- Enables children and young people to get the help they need when they need it.
- Supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice.
- Involves working together to make things better.
- The 8 wellbeing indicators consider the basic requirements for all children and young people to grow and develop and reach their full potential: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

Guidance for young people on reporting a concern about bullying

All pupils are advised to tell a member of school staff if they have a concern about bullying behaviour. If they are able to talk to their Guidance Teacher this is the best person to speak to. However, they can talk in the first instance, to any member of staff, this may be their class teacher or a teacher they feel confident talking to. They may wish to speak with a peer within the class or a senior pupil. Support will then be provided where advice on strategies to deal with bullying behaviour will be given, including online bullying.

Guidance for parents on reporting a concern about bullying

All parents are advised to telephone their child's Guidance Teacher if they have a concern about bullying behaviour.

If a parent has a concern relating to bullying behaviour through social media out with school they should contact Police Scotland.

As a proactive measure to ensure their child's online safety parents should consider the following actions:

- Check the set-up of social media accounts e.g. privacy settings.
- Be vigilant on their child's use of social media and what is being posted.
- If concerned about bullying behaviour on social media contact relevant agencies e.g. Police Scotland.

Recording Bullying Incidents

Sgoil Lionacleit has clear procedures in place for the recording of bullying incidents on the management information system (SEEMIS) if and when it is appropriate to do so.

Information on how this policy will be shared with all stakeholders, including parents/carers and young people

The policy will be discussed on an annual basis. For more information in **Appendix 9**.

How we will continue to raise awareness of the policy and of approaches to tackling bullying through the curriculum and other programmes

- This policy is for all staff to follow. It sets out a definition of bullying and the procedures for staff to report and investigate incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Weekly PSE lesson teaches about personal relationships, the appreciation of cultural differences and bullying, including the school's procedures for dealing with it.
- Several subjects in the curriculum (Religious and Moral Education, English, Social Subjects) teach about personal relationships, tolerance, the multi-cultural nature of society and bullying.

Guidance for Staff

The school's positive relationships policy is part of the induction process for new staff.

For guidance on how staff respond to incidents and accusations of bullying, see **Appendix 4**.



Appendix 1 - Behaviour - Standards and Expectations

Guidelines

The following are guidelines that all pupils and staff are expected to follow:

- Pupils and staff should respect the rights of others at all times.
- Everyone should be courteous and considerate to others.
- Pupils must attend during school hours unless granted permission to be absent or have written permission to leave school premises. Parents/Guardians must let the school know if a pupil is absent.
- Pupils are to wear the school dress code – (the wearing of football shirts/colours is forbidden).
- Pupils must follow instructions issued by staff.
- The Council has strict policies on smoking, alcohol and drug consumption – they are forbidden on school premises and transport and as such pupils should not bring prohibited items.
- Students must not bring offensive weapons of any kind.
- Pupils must behave on all school transport.
- All school property, including equipment and books issued, should be treated with care and respect. Any deliberate damage to school property will be the pupil's responsibility to replace.
- Mobile phone use – the school policy must be adhered to.
- The use of personal music is prohibited during class times unless otherwise indicated by the class teacher.
- At break time year pupils must remain within the school grounds at all times.
- All food and drink should be consumed in the cafeteria area or outside.
- Litter must be placed in the bins provided.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.
- Pupils who do not act responsibly or interfere with the rights of others will face consequences for their actions.

Mobile Devices

See mobile device policy. https://www.sgoillionacleit.org.uk/docs/pdr/mobile_device_policy.pdf

Corridors

All staff should remind pupils of the Building Code should they encounter disorderly conduct.

A verbal reprimand in most cases should be all that is required however if a pupil responds in an inappropriate manner or refuses to follow instructions the staff member should advise the pupil that they will take the matter further and the incident should then be reported direct to SLT and a referral completed.

If the incident observed is a serious matter and requires immediate attention – for example, if someone is being hurt or in a dangerous situation, then the nearest panic button should be activated.

SLT should be alerted immediately.

Appendix 1 (continued)

Parental Involvement

The support of parents to any school is vital. At Sgoil Lionacleit we work in partnership with parents/guardians to get it right for all the pupils in our school. We request that parents:

- Support the school relationships policy;
- Make regular checks of the personal organiser;
- Contact us with details of absences and appointments;
- Ensure that homework tasks set by the school are completed and that their child comes to school prepared for learning;
- Encourage their child to arrive at school on time and wearing the school's dress code;
- Make sure that their child does not bring prohibited items to school.

Additional Support Needs

Some pupils in school have been identified as having social, emotional or behavioural difficulties which result in challenging behaviour. These pupils should have an Action Plan, Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) which includes behaviour support. This may mean that some pupils are having support for their behaviour which is additional to, or different from, the procedures in the whole school behaviour policy. The Action Plan, IEP or CSP will give details of this.

In addition, some pupils may have Risk Assessments/Safe Plans. These will identify risks to pupils, staff or members of the public and will outline the measures that are in place to minimize these risks. In some cases, this will include measures to be adopted for physical intervention.

The council's "Improving Behaviour Policy" should be consulted for fuller guidance relevant to pupils with additional support needs.

Behaviour Code

- Follow all instructions
- Have respect for self and others
- Be on time
- Be prepared for learning

Building Code

- Pupils should not run inside the building and keep to the left when moving around the building.
- Bags should be either with pupils in class or in a locker during break and lunchtime.
- Pupils should only consume food and drinks (other than water) in the cafeteria area or courtyard – this includes any type of snack.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.
- Pupils should only use vending machines at interval or lunchtime.
- Pupils should dispose of all litter in the appropriate bins.
- Pupils should only use the lift with permission of a member of staff.

Appendix 2 - Promoting Positive Behaviour - School Merits System

How it Works

- All pupils will start every class with a merit and this should be highlighted as a positive. This will contribute to house points at the end of each term.
- If a Pupil's behaviour is exceptional in class, an extra merit can be issued by the class teacher.
- Should a pupil's behaviour fall short of expectation, they will be advised that their merit has been withdrawn.
- Should the pupil's behaviour fail to improve, a demerit will be issued.
- Continued poor choices could result in detention or see the pupil removed to PT. If the pupil is removed from class, then the teacher will create a referral.
- Exceptional behaviour can warrant more than one merit.

Examples of Merit Worthy Behaviour

- Arriving on time
- Listening well
- Completing an appropriate amount of work
- Being helpful to others
- Completing additional work
- Performing well
- Doing the right thing the whole lesson
- Performing well
- Completing homework on time
- Improvement
- Preparation for Learning

Examples of Behaviour Which May Warrant a Demerit

- Late to class
- Distracting others
- Not attempting work
- Being disruptive or inappropriately augmentative
- Inappropriate language
- Chewing gum
- Inappropriate phone use
- Not completing homework
- Shouting out in class
- Infringing on the rights of others

Appendix 3 - Responding When Behaviour Falls Below Expectation

- In order to de-escalate situations where the classroom teacher feels it is necessary to remove a pupil from class (e.g. aggressive, persistently disruptive or unsafe behaviour), pupils may be sent to the department's Principal Teacher, or if need be to a nearby teacher colleague (by mutual agreement).
- Removal from class will result in a SEEMiS Referral to the Principal Teacher and demerit for that lesson. If a pupil is relocated, the classroom teacher should provide relevant work for the pupil.
- Principal teachers will hold a reflective discussion with the pupil, consider department/faculty level interventions, and where necessary follow up with a restorative meeting between the pupil and the classroom teacher (mediated by the PT).
- Where a detention is issued at any stage, the work set should be relevant and meaningful. This may include work which gives the pupil a chance to reflect on their behaviour.

Further Support if there is No Improvement in Behaviour

- If the Principal teacher feels there has been no improvement in behaviour, they should liaise with the pupil's assigned Principal teacher of Guidance (PTG) to look at context and discuss next steps. The PTG will contact parents to inform of them of behavioural issues.
- Should the Principal Teacher feel there is no improvement in behaviour, the Head of Year will arrange a meeting with parents/guardians.
- Should there be no improvement following the steps taken above, the Head Teacher will call a further meeting with Parents/Guardians. Possible next steps will be discussed.
- If there is still no improvement in behaviour following the above steps, the Head Teacher will work with senior officers in the authority to decide on suitable next steps.

Escalated Incidents

The majority of pupil misbehaviour should be dealt in the manner written above and relationships should be restored quickly. However, in extreme cases of misbehaviour, staff seek support from directly from a Senior Leader.

If a young person refuses to move from class, the class teacher must seek support from their PT in the first instance, who will then seek support from SLT if the young person still refuses to move. If a young person leaves a room without permission, class teachers should contact the school office so that they can alert SLT.

Appendix 4 - Responding to Reports and Incidents of Bullying

Early intervention and prevention are key elements of our approach which is focused on ensuring we get it right for all of our children and young people.

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 have the ability to bounce back from this type of behaviour. For this reason, it is important that we establish exactly what has happened and respond appropriately if bullying has taken place.

Assessing the Situation

Incidents or accusations of bullying should always be taken seriously by staff and passed in the first instance to the young person's Principal Teacher of Guidance. To gain a clear picture of events and surrounding factors, best practice is to ask:

- What was the behaviour?
- What impact did it have?
- What does the child or young person want to happen?
- What do I need to do about it?
- What attitudes, prejudices or other factors have influenced the behaviour?

If the PTG suspected that bullying has taken place, they will make an assessment on the severity of the incident. In some cases, the PTG will refer the case to the pupil's Head of Year at this stage. Further investigation is then carried out. This may involve:

- Speaking with all the young people involved, preserving confidentiality.
- Speaking with children or young people or others who witnessed the incident, while preserving confidentiality.
- Speaking with parents (after consultation with the young people involved).
- Seeking advice from partner services and relevant organisations when necessary.

Appendix 4 (continued)

Supporting Young People who are Experiencing Bullying Behaviour

The Guidance Teacher or Head of Year will respond to enable agency to be restored and consider the wishes of the young person. To support young people, the PTG/HoY will use a range of strategies which may include:

- Reassuring the pupil that they have done the right thing in informing us of the situation and that we will support them in the bullying behaviour being addressed.
- One-to-one follow up meetings with the pupils PTG/HoY to monitor improvement of the situation and offer further support.
- Peer support strategies and, if the pupil wants, we can arrange a restorative meeting with the pupil(s) who carried out the bullying behaviour.
- Involvement of parent/guardian – this includes keeping them informed about what the school is doing to support their child.
- Use of the school Wellbeing Hub/school wellbeing officer when necessary to increase confidence and provide support.
- Seeking additional support for the pupil. This may involve engagement with counselling or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).



Appendix 4 (continued)

Supporting Young People who have Exhibited Bullying Behaviour

We help children and young people who demonstrate bullying behaviour by providing clear expectations about behaviour as well as providing a range of ways to respond. This can include taking steps to repair a relationship, and where appropriate, supporting them to make amends. We challenge prejudice and offer the opportunity to learn and change behaviour. Consideration is given to any factors that may impact upon a child or young person's wellbeing, including whether any additional support for learning is required.

Additional support can include strategies such as focussing on acknowledging grievances, peer mentoring, counselling, or referral to specific support services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

In short, young people who are exhibiting bullying behaviour will need help and support to:

- Identify the feelings that cause them to act this way.
- Develop alternative ways of responding to these feelings.
- Understand the impact of their behaviour on other people.
- Repair relationships.

We use a range of strategies when dealing with young people who have exhibited bullying behaviour. Our approach may include:

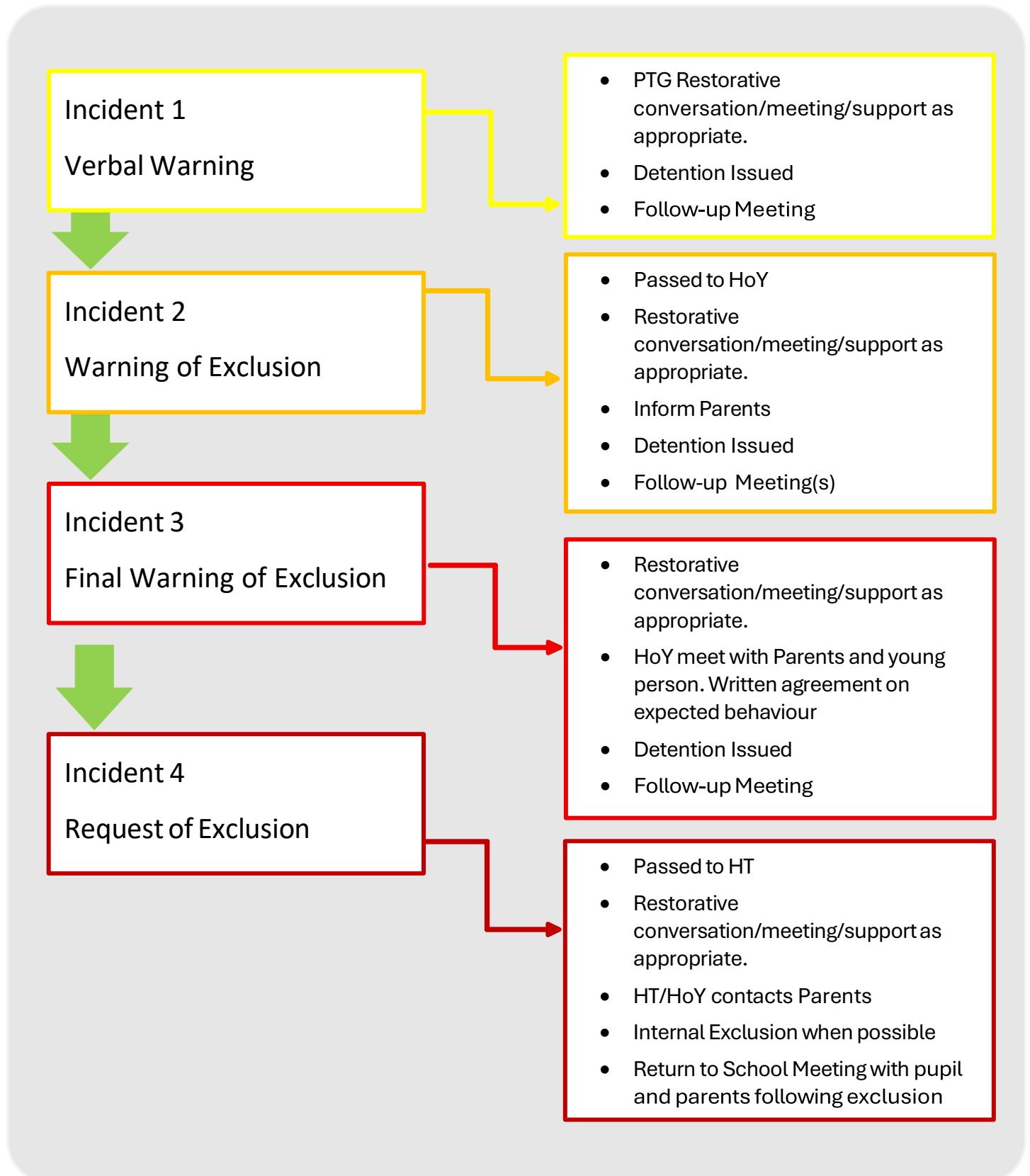
- Interviewing the pupil (or pupils) demonstrating bullying behaviour separately.
- Listening to their version of events and talk to any further witnesses.
- Being mindful that all behaviour is communication and consider what this behaviour may be telling us about the pupil who has demonstrated it.
- Reinforcing the message that bullying is a breach of other people's rights, that it is not acceptable, and that it is expected to stop. Seek a commitment to this end.
- Affirming that it is right for pupils to report that bullying behaviour has occurred.
- Considering consequences in line with the school's behaviour procedures.
- If desired by the pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour, offering the chance for a supported restorative meeting.
- Advising those involved that the situation will continue to be monitored to check that it has not started up again.
- Arranging follow up meetings if appropriate.
- Contacting parents of all parties to make sure they know about the bullying.

If the bullying behaviour persists despite these interventions, the PTG will refer the case to the pupil's Head of Year. The flow chart in **Appendix 5** explains how we will work through next steps in cases where bullying continues to persist.

Where there is a report of bullying behaviour through social media it may be necessary to work in partnership with other agencies such as Police Scotland.

Appendix 5 - Anti-Bullying Flow Chart

The flow chart below explains how we respond to incidents of bullying. Depending on the severity of the incident, we may fast-track past certain stages.



Appendix 6 - Prejudice-Based Bullying

Children and young people can experience bullying for a variety of reasons; where they live, their sexual orientations, gender, disability, the colour of their skin, what clothes they wear or what team they support. The one thing that these have in common is difference or perceived difference – some children and young people don't see or understand diversity, they still only see difference.

Difference, or perceived difference, can be a catalyst for children and young people being bullied. If you would like to find out more about the different types of prejudice-based bullying listed below, visit our useful links section.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, together with a reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to continue and go undetected.

Body Image

Body image is hugely important to children and young people and bullying because of body image can have a significantly negative impact. For example, a child or young person who is noticeably over or underweight may find that they are particularly vulnerable to bullying behaviour.

Homophobic Bullying

Homophobic bullying is mainly directed towards young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) or young people who are questioning their sexuality.

However, it can also be directed at young people who do not conform to strict gender 'norms'. For example, a boy who doesn't like football may stand out as being different. Ultimately, any young person can be homophobically bullied and any young person can display homophobic attitudes which should be challenged.

Transgender

Is an umbrella term used to describe someone who does not conform to society's view of being male or female. Children and young people who are experiencing confusion over their gender identity may be the target of transphobia. Transphobia at its most basic is the fear of a transgender person and the hatred, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice that this fear brings. This can result in bullying behaviour towards an individual because they are not seen to be conforming to gender stereotyping and 'norms'. If children and young people are experiencing confusion over their gender identity, they may be reluctant to challenge bullying behaviour that could attract further attention to them.

Looked After Children

Children and young people who are looked after and accommodated are vulnerable to bullying behaviour for a number of reasons: It may be due to regular changes in schools or where they are placed, which can make forming friendships difficult; they may have poor relationship skills stemming from attachment difficulties; inappropriate reactions to situations as a result of learned behaviours; a reluctance to make friends; low self-esteem, lack of role models and a heightened sense of privacy.

Appendix 6 (continued)

Race and Ethnicity

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups, including the gypsy/travelling community, often experience bullying based on perceived differences in dress, communication, appearance, beliefs and/or culture. The status of 'minority' in a school, community or organisation can often make a child or young person the focus for those involved in bullying behaviour. This can arise from a misguided and/or learned belief that they 'deserve' to be treated differently or with less respect.

Religion and Belief

Lack of knowledge and understanding about the traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths, or having no faith, can lead to religious intolerance. Lack of awareness about the differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may fuel bullying.

Sectarianism

Most people understandably associate Sectarianism with religion. The reality of prejudice however means that your family background, the football team you support, the community you live in, the school you attend and even the colour of your clothing can mark you out as a target for sectarian abuse - whatever your beliefs may be.

Sexism and Gender

Gender inequality and stereotyping can leave children and young people, and in particular girls, who do not conform to these norms vulnerable to bullying.

Bullying in the form of derogatory language, online comments and the spreading of malicious rumours can be used to regulate both girls' and boys' behaviour - suggesting that they are not being a real man or a real woman if they do not behave in such a way towards others.

Personality traits that do not fit in to the unwritten rules of 'appropriate' male and female behaviour can make children and young people a target for their actual or perceived difference. These terms can be of an explicit gender-based nature and it is worth noting that many can involve using terms for people who are gay and lesbian as a negative towards someone.

This behaviour should not be confused with sexually aggressive behaviour, which is potentially a form of criminal harassment and should be treated as such. For this reason, in Scotland we recommend against using the term 'sexual bullying' as a descriptor in policies or in practice – it is an unclear and reductive term. Sexual assault and exploitation are not types of bullying, they are abuse.

Gender-based bullying – if unchallenged can lead to a deepening of attitudes and behaviour towards girls or those who do not conform to gender norms that can escalate to more abusive behaviours. This behaviour can take place face to face, in private and online or sometimes a combination of all of these. What happens or is shared online will directly impact on a person and that should be our focus. In all probability online activity will relate directly to an experience or conversation they have had in person.

Successful anti-bullying work focuses on equalities and developing and modelling relationships based on respect and fairness – and this must include gender.

Appendix 6 (continued)

Disablist Bullying

People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision, and may result in a need for additional support to be provided.

Young Carers

The lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member who has a physical illness or disability, mental health problem, sensory or learning disability or issues with the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Depending on responsibilities at home, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form relationships; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to educational difficulties.

Social and Economic Prejudice

Bullying due to social and economic status can take place in any group no matter how little diversity exists in it. Small differences in perceived class/family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, belongings, clothing, hygiene, etc can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant social economic group or class. Bullying of children who endure parental substance misuse can also be prevalent in some locations.

Appendix 7 – Bullying on Social Media

With the rise of mobile phones and hand-held devices, social media has become a part of everyone's life and the use of social media has seen the growth of online bullying. Forms of online bullying can include:

- Spreading malicious & abusive rumours
- Harassment
- Intimidation & blackmail
- Stalking someone online
- Posting embarrassing or humiliating images
- Trolling
- Setting up false profiles and catfishing

If someone is being bullied via social media, the first thing they should do is block the person who is bullying them and report them to the social media site.

Screenshots of the messages should be taken as they may be needed as proof.

Any incidences of cyberbullying should also be reported to the young person's Guidance Teacher as often the bullying is not isolated to social media.

Parents & guardians can do a great deal to safeguard young people online.

Appendix 8 - Useful Links and Resources

Childline - www.childline.org.uk - ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19.

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland - www.cypcs.org.uk - This site is for children and young people in Scotland, your parents and the adults who work with you. Here, you can learn about your rights, make your voice heard and find out who can help you live a safe and happy life.

Respectme - www.respectme.org.uk/ - We work with all adults involved in the lives of children and young people to give them the practical skills and confidence to deal with children who are bullied and those who bully others.

See Me - <https://www.seemescotland.org/> - See Me is Scotland's programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. We are funded by the Scottish Government and Comic Relief and managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation.

Stonewall – www.stonewall.org.uk - Institutions have power and influence. We will reach more people and have a greater impact by transforming institutions and by embedding an inclusive and accepting culture. We will work with all organisations, including workplaces, schools, healthcare providers, sports clubs and religious institutions, here and abroad, to ensure they offer inclusive, equal and inspiring environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people.

Unicef Rights Respecting Schools - www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/ - The Rights Respecting Schools Award is a Unicef UK programme that aims to put children's rights at the heart of schools in the UK. We work with thousands of schools across the country to embed children's rights in their ethos and culture to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential.

Appendix 9 – Sharing This Policy with All Stakeholders

At the start of the session, the policy will be revisited in all PSE classes. The policy will be discussed and reviewed with colleagues in Sgoil Lionacleit on an annual basis. A copy will be available on the website for all parents/carers, young people and stakeholders. <https://www.sgoillionacleit.org.uk/docs/pdr/positive-relationships-policy.pdf> . Paper copies will be available from the school office on request.