



# Bonnyrigg Primary School Bullying Policy

August 2021  
(Review August 2022)

## Anti-Bullying Statement

Bonnyrigg Primary School follows Midlothian guidelines 'Approaches to Anti Bullying for Children and Young People'. It states that:

'Any form of bullying is unacceptable, including prejudice-based bullying and cyber-bullying'.

Bullying and unkindness whether physical or emotional are entirely unacceptable at Bonnyrigg Primary School. It conflicts sharply with the school's values and we will always treat it seriously.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, **usually persistent and repeated over time**, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying usually occurs when an individual or group uses strength or power to hurt, threaten or frighten someone, by intimidating or demeaning them.

Forms of bullying might be:

Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding/isolating or tormenting

Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist - racial taunts, graffiti or gestures

Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic - focussing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours or teasing

Cyber/Social Media - all areas of internet, such as email and app misuse

Mobile threats by text messaging and calls.

All children at Bonnyrigg Primary School have the right to enjoy their lives free of bullying and harassment. Anyone who feels bullied or intimidated has the right to expect the School to listen and to act promptly and sensitively to deal with the problem. The School will investigate any incidents that have happened during school time that are brought to our attention. The sooner they are brought to our attention, the sooner they can be dealt with.

We encourage the children at Bonnyrigg to treat others as they would hope to be treated themselves in an atmosphere of mutual respect. If an incident occurs we also encourage the children to do what they can to show their disapproval of bullying and ask them to seek adult help. It is important that the children recognise that there is culpability if they see or are aware of bullying but do nothing about it. Neglecting to act makes the bystander complicit in the bullying. If they are aware of bullying happening in the school it should immediately be reported to a member of staff.

## Policy into Practice

There are 4 key aspects to prevent and reduce bullying:

### Developing Positive Relationships

Everyone at Bonnyrigg Primary School is committed to providing a caring, nurturing, friendly and safe environment for all pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We use our *Positive Relationships* Policy to create a culture of respect and responsibility. We have P7 buddies in P1 and teachers hold Circle Time sessions with their classes.

### Building Capacity, Confidence, Resilience and Skills

As part of Curriculum for Excellence, classes use the Experiences and Outcomes to teach Health and Wellbeing. Classes have recognition boards, follow the school expectations and learn about their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Pupils are involved in pupil groups where they help to shape our school, and expectations are shared at assemblies. Our Support for Learning team have regular tracking meetings with the Senior Leadership Team to identify needs and appropriate supports. Children learn about skills for learning, life and work through regular assemblies and work done in class. Our "Bonnyrigg Learner Qualities" and the "Midlothian Learner posters" support this.

### Preventing Bullying Through Strategies

Most staff are trained in the restorative approach and incidents will be dealt with promptly, consistently and effectively following school procedures. All staff have read and signed this statement.

### Supporting Those who are Bullied

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur we want all pupils to be confident and talk to a member of staff about matters of concern to them. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that we encourage our pupils to tell a member of staff, if they know that bullying is happening in our school.

## **Actions to Prevent Bullying**

Pupils should be aware that staff seriously disapprove of bullying behaviour and will act promptly and effectively if bullying is brought to their attention. Staff will promote positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships.

What bullying can involve, its causes and results, and strategies to deal with it will be explored in detail **each year** with all pupils.

Pupils should be listened to and taken seriously. Opportunities should be provided for them to express their views and opinions, whether it be during lessons, or informally.

Our Play Therapist is an important part of our pastoral support service, providing specialist skills to our pupils who require them. She is available to give confidential advice and support to pupils who can refer themselves to her on a drop-in basis when they have social or emotional concerns (provided they have parental consent). On occasion, a member of staff may suggest a pupil be referred to her.

Pupils should be encouraged to "tell" when bullying occurs, if not to their own class teacher, then to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Friends of the target should be encouraged to do the telling, if necessary: this is difficult and pupils often don't like the thought of it, but the more it occurs the more acceptable it becomes. Children should be reminded how important it is to let someone know if a problem recurs. Any staff or pupils who witness any form of bullying, however minor or who are at all concerned about any behaviour should report it to the Senior Leadership Team. These incidents may be part of a bigger picture of which the Senior Leadership Team may be aware.

## Procedures for Dealing with Reported Bullying

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will reassure and support the pupils involved. They will then inform the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible.
- The member of the Senior Leadership Team who is leading the investigation should inform the teachers of any other pupils involved in the incident as soon as possible so that they may be involved in the investigation process.
- The target will be interviewed on their own and asked to recall an account of events.
- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, including any witnesses will be interviewed individually and asked to recall an immediate account of events.
- The incident should be recorded and saved into the child/children's GIRFEC folder/s. The incident will also be logged on the SEEMIS system.
- The target will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, separately from the alleged perpetrator, to discuss the investigation findings. They will be offered support to develop a strategy to help them. They will also be offered a restorative conversation with the alleged perpetrator.
- The alleged bully will be interviewed at a later stage by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, separately from the target, and it will be made clear why their behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. They will be offered guidance on modifying their behaviour. If appropriate a disciplinary sanction will be given as set out in the school's Positive Relationships Policy.
- The parents/carers of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- A way forward, including disciplinary sanctions, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.

In very serious cases, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Children and Families.

## **Bullying Information, Support and Helplines**

### **Outside Agencies who can offer support:**

Childline: 0800 1111

NSPCC: 0800 800 5000

### **Stand up to Bullying**

[www.standuptobullying.co.uk](http://www.standuptobullying.co.uk)

Advice for parents and children about dealing with bullying

### **Bullying UK**

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Telephone: 0808 800 2222

Advice and help for parents and children

### **Useful reading:**

`Bullying: Wise Guide' by Michele Elliott

`Don't Pick on Me: How to Handle Bullying' by Rosemary Stone

`Your child bullying' by J Alexander

`101 Ways to deal with bullying' - a guide for parents, by M Elliott

`Keeping Safe: A practical guide to talking with children, by Kidscape

`Helping children cope with bullying' by S Lawson

`Confident children: a parents' guide to helping children feel good', G Lindenfield

`Bullying and how to fight it: A Guide for families', by A Mellor

`Fighting, teasing and bullying: Simple and effective ways to help your child', by J Pearce

`The bullying problem: How to deal with difficult children', by A Train