



PENICUIK HIGH SCHOOL



ANTI-BULLYING AND EQUALITIES POLICY

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School Vision, Values and Aims

One of the key aims of the school, supported by its current PRIDE values is to develop all our young people and provide the best education possible so they are able to become productive and fulfilled citizens who progress into positive working lives and careers.

At all times our PRIDE values should be visible within our school community:

- Participation
- Respect
- Inclusion
- Determination
- Excellence

To ensure this we need to work in partnership with all parents/carers and community partners to offer the widest possible curriculum that develops personal and social skills and ensures they attain suitable qualifications to progress to positive destination after school.

In line with the Scottish Government, our school is currently focused on improving two outcomes for students

- Raising attainment for all
- Closing the poverty related attainment gap

We aim to do this by working continuously within three contexts

- Improving our practice in Learning, Teaching and Assessment through The Big 5 Project and Practitioner Enquiry
- Developing our Curriculum to be more inclusive
- Improving our Quality Improvement processes

Establishing a Positive Environment for All

At Penicuik High School we believe it is the responsibility of staff and pupils to create a positive, supportive atmosphere in which bullies will find it difficult to operate. The school currently have a number of support programmes in place to maintain a supportive environment.

- Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme
- S1 reading programme
- Pupil voice
- Bronze RRSA
- Student Leaders

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide an overview of our Equalities and Anti-bullying ethos within Penicuik High School.

In 2019 Penicuik High School achieved the **Bronze Award from UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)**. The UNICEF RRSA supports schools across the UK to embed children's human rights in their ethos and culture. The award recognises achievement in putting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) at the heart of a school's practice **to improve well-being and outcomes for every child and to help all children realise their potential**.

It is every child's right not to be bullied. Children's rights are unique in that many of them, although designed for the safety and protection of children, have to be provided for by adults and the government. Although children and young people are covered under the Human Rights Act 1998, their rights are more clearly specified under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Although neither specifically mentions bullying, bullying behaviour does breach a number of the articles in both. Alongside this, both outline the responsibilities of adults to protect and safeguard children and young people from bullying behaviour.

Local Context

"Midlothian Council as an Education Authority is founded on inclusive values, and seeks to provide a wide range of high quality services to all, while giving priority to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups in our communities. The Education Authority continues to strive to make a positive difference to the lives of children, young people and their families. The Council/Education Authority recognises the individuality and diverse needs of all children, young people and their families." Midlothian Equality Plan 2017 – 2021

Penicuik

Penicuik High School is committed to creating an inclusive environment for the whole school community that demonstrates shared values of PRIDE – Participation, Respect, Inclusion, Determination and Excellence. Our school recognises and celebrates diversity within a culture of respect and fairness and aims to meet the needs of every child in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and the Wellbeing Indicators.

We endeavour to foster the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Definitions

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. Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour might not be repeated, the threat that it might can be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

Bullying Behaviour

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face and/or online
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face to face and/or online)
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online)

We define Equality as:

- creating a fairer society, where everyone can take part and where everyone has the opportunity to be all they can be. Equality of opportunity has a legal framework to ensure groups with protected characteristics are not discriminated against.

We define Diversity as:

- recognising and valuing difference, where everyone is respected for who they are.

As a school community we adopt the approaches promoted in the Equality Act (2010) which protects people from discrimination on the basis of the following protected characteristics (further definitions in Appendix 1):

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

Additional Support Needs

Schools are expected to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act (2010) to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. Penicuik High School ensures that all provision is in place that is required to support and ensure positive outcomes for young people with additional support needs.

Our approach to Equality is based on the following key principles:

- All learners are of equal value. This is irrespective of their race, gender and gender identity, religious or belief, or sexual orientation. However, this does not mean we treat all young people the same, sometimes it means giving extra help so that they have the same opportunities and outcomes as others.
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which young people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities that are different from each other.
- We foster a shared sense of inclusion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
- We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all young people can make good progress and achieve/attain to their highest potential.
- We work to raise standards for all young people, including the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of young people raises standards across the whole school.
- We challenge prejudice and stereotyping. We challenge and report all incidents of prejudice - based bullying, for example racist, homophobic or bullying of people because of a disability. We also challenge gender-based and other stereotype bullying. Our Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the requirements of the Equality Act (2010)

Responsibilities

Penicuik High School expects that all staff, pupils, parents and carers will work together to prevent and reduce bullying and prejudice amongst children and young people by:

- Developing positive relationships amongst children, young people and adults which are mutually respectful, responsible and trusting
- Building capacity, resilience and skills in children and young people, and parents and carers to prevent and deal with bullying
- Preventing bullying of children and young people through a range of strategies and approaches
- Supporting children, young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying

To promote a safe environment for our young people, we are committed to:

- Developing education and awareness through regular inputs to PSE and Assemblies
- Developing a climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships and a culture where bullying is unacceptable
- Pupil involvement and engagement
- Mental, emotional and social health and wellbeing programmes and activities
- Adopting restorative and nurturing approaches and principles
- Working with our community police officer

Tackling bullying is the responsibility of all. Adults should provide an environment which is safe, secure and in which children and young people feel they can discuss sensitive issues and are listened to.

Penicuik High School Staff	Penicuik High School Pupils	Penicuik High School Parents/carers
Dealing effectively and recording any instances of bullying which are brought to their attention	Respect yourself and others; demonstrate the PRIDE values through your actions	Ensuring and promoting their children's health, welfare and development
Creating a climate of respect, responsibility and positive relationships and a culture where bullying is unacceptable	Developing positive relationships and attitudes	Encouraging safe and responsible use of social media platforms
Keeping a high profile in corridors/classroom doors during period changeovers	Challenge bullying behaviour if they feel able to do so	Communicating concerns to a relevant member of school staff in the first instance, and working in partnership with them to resolve these concern
Ensuring that children and young people are aware of the procedure for reporting instances of bullying and have a trusted person to whom they can report their concerns	Telling a trusted person if they have any worries about bullying	
Ensuring that all staff, parents and carers are aware of, and comply with, the school's Anti-Bullying Policy	Keeping themselves and others safe with support from adults	
Regularly reviewing our policy to take into account new developments in technology or legislation	Engaging in safe, responsible use of social media platforms	
Through the curriculum and related activities, building the capacity of children and young people to challenge bullying behaviour		

A Restorative Community

Penicuik High School is a small community. We pride ourselves on the relationships that are evident between our pupils and staff. When relationships within our school community break down, we use a restorative approach. Restorative practice is an approach to resolve conflict and build relationships in a non-confrontational way, which allows students who have caused harm the opportunity to empathise, accept responsibility for their actions, and put things right.

It is a conversation based approach between teachers and students that directs students to empathise, accept responsibility for their actions, and enables them to repair harm caused. It is highly effective at taking the heat out of potentially confrontational situations to prevent them from escalating.

An important aspect of managing relationships in school is consistency. If staff are dealing with an incident they should consider using a restorative approach. The general 'script' we would like to be used is:

1. What happened?
2. How did you feel at the time?
3. How do you feel now?
4. Who else has been affected?
5. What do we need to do to make things better?

Formal Restorative Meetings will be led/mediated by PTs/PTs Guidance/DHTs and are designed to 'move forward' a situation that has progressed through our staged system and when relationships have broken down. It is important that the person mediating the formal meeting takes time to prepare both parties involved, in advance of the meeting. Should either party feel that the relationship is not improving, following the formal meeting, they should approach the mediator.

Staff training on restorative approaches will feature on our annual staff development programme and will be introduced to our PSE programme for students.

Appendix 1

Additional Definitions

Cyber-bullying

Online bullying shouldn't be treated differently from face-to-face bullying. Online bullying, or 'cyberbullying' as it is often referred to on social networking sites and online gaming platforms. A person can be called names, threatened or have rumours spread about them and this can (like other behaviours) happen in person and online. We address online bullying effectively when we address it as part of our whole anti-bullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy.

Prejudice-based Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons.

Additional Support Needs: An additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

Age: Although prejudice and discrimination based on age is not applicable in school settings, it can affect children and young people in a variety of other settings. For example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

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, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

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Body Image and Physical appearance: This can be hugely important to children and young people, with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact upon their wellbeing.

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.

Gypsy/Travellers: This group of children and young people are a particularly discriminated against and marginalised group and concerns about bullying are especially acute for secondary schools. Perceived risks about bullying and parents' own experiences of discriminatory behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people, as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller families, such as Roma, may have similar concerns.

Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying: Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

Racism “A racist incident is an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”. While this is not absolutely definitive, it requires all allegations to be treated seriously from the outset, investigated and if substantial dealt with and then recorded. This approach is in line with our anti-bullying procedures and all forms of identity based bullying.

Homophobia

Homophobic bullying is when people behave or speak in a way which makes someone feel bullied because of their actual or perceived sexuality. People may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning or possibly just because they are seen as being different.

Appendix 2

Initial Referral (to PT Guidance) Requirements

SEEMIS will automatically indicate what member of staff is reporting the incident but please ensure you outline the following in your written referral:

- **Who reported the incident? (if this was a pupil)**
- **When did the alleged incident take place?**
- **Where did the incident take place? (this is an option on SEEMIS, but please indicate if specific location is not a SEEMIS option)**
- **People involved (including witnesses)**
- **Type of alleged incident**
 - Verbal
 - Written
 - Physical
 - Socio-economic
 - LAC child
 - Damage to property
 - Isolation
 - Incitement
 - Using technology
 - Body image
 - Other (please specify)

Once the PT Guidance has made further investigations they should also use the template above in SEEMIS Incident Manager. They should add '**Outcome**' to their report and communicate this to the class teacher involved.