



Langholm Academy Anti -Bullying Policy

Policy Statement

Langholm Academy is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment where everyone can work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from victimisation and fear, ensuring as far as is reasonably practicable, the prevention of all forms of bullying. Adults working in schools are duty bearers for children's rights – they have a responsibility to promote, protect and respect children's rights. Our Anti-Bullying policy outlines the steps we take to ensure our pupils are safe and free from bullying in our school.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an intentional, repeated behaviour that hurts, harms, or humiliates either physically or emotionally, and can happen while at school, in the community, or online. Those bullying often have more social or physical "power," while those targeted have difficulty stopping the behaviour.

Bullying is a clear breach of children's rights (Human Rights Act 1998)

UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child

There are a number of articles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child that link to our Anti-Bullying Policy including:

- Article 2 (non-discrimination) - The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.
- Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) - Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.
- Article 13 (freedom of expression) - Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
- Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect) - Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.



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What do we mean by bullying?

- It is repeated behaviour that treats another person badly over time.
- Behaviour that makes you feel unsafe and/or puts you down as a person.
- Physical – aggressive or violent, being pushed, hit, kicked, intimidated.
- Verbal – name-calling, threatening, being laughed at, teasing, being shouted at.
- Social – being purposefully excluded from plans with your ‘friends’.
- Cyber bullying (online, on social media or gaming forums) – unkind comments, sharing photos with negative comments.
- Discrimination - against race, nationality, sexuality (including homophobia, biphobia and transphobia), faith or another protected characteristic.
- Sexual bullying – unwanted sexual comments or contact, spreading of rumours.
- Emotional or psychological – when someone gets what they want by making others feel angry/sad (manipulation) or being told they are not good enough.

Possible impacts of bullying

- Poor mental health (anxiety, depression, low mood)
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Physical injury including self-harming
- Negative effect on performance/attendance at school
- Potential for long term consequences lasting into adulthood

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community (pupils, staff and parents), should be committed to working together to:

- ensure children can express their thoughts and opinions, and have their views taken seriously
(UNCRC Articles 12 & 13)
- ensure children are involved in decisions which affect them
(UNCRC Article 12)
- develop a culture of mutual respect
- prevent and tackle bullying
- protect children from violence and abuse
(UNCRC Article 19)





- address the needs of persons experiencing bullying as well as those displaying bullying within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support.

Prevention of Bullying

We will:

- Ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy and are confident in following the identified procedures
- Provide opportunities to develop understanding of what bullying is and is not, and how to react to this behaviour
- Provide opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience, wherever possible, but especially through our PSP lessons, MVP Programme, Extra-Curricular Activities and Assemblies
- Ensure that everyone feels confident that they will be listened to and supported if they feel that they are being bullied
- Promote respect and diversity through the everyday interactions of all members of the school community, lessons, assemblies and whole school events
- Invite relevant outside agencies to support as appropriate
- Work towards achieving the LGBT Gold charter
- Work towards achieving Rights Respecting School Gold charter
- Pupils creating an Anti-Bullying charter to be displayed in each classroom

Dealing with Bullying – what are pupil's options?

Advice from Respect Me, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service

When it comes to dealing with bullying there isn't always one 'right' answer. This information will help if you're being bullied, but it can also help if you know someone who is being bullied and you're not sure what to say or do to help them.

Telling someone or getting someone else involved can often help you to feel better. But what works for someone else won't always work for you. You will know what feels right for you and your situation, but you don't have to limit yourself to trying just one thing; you might need to try a couple of different options to find one that works for you.





You could tell an adult

In most cases this is good advice. But does it feel right for you and your situation? Maybe you're worried about being called a 'grass' or people finding out you've been bullied. For some people, that can seem worse than the bullying itself. But telling the right adult really can make a difference. Talk to someone you can trust; a parent, teacher, brother or sister, football coach or a youth worker. Let them know what you would like to happen and ask them to keep you involved throughout.

Don't bottle things up

If you're struggling it's important not to bottle up your feelings – this can make you feel worse. Even if you don't want help to stop the bullying, it can help to talk to a friend or someone else you trust about how you feel. You might find telling a friend easier. Buddy systems, peer mentoring and counselling are there to help you find a way of dealing with problems like bullying, and the people involved are trained to listen and help you talk things through. This might be worth exploring.

If you don't feel comfortable talking to someone you know but you think it'll help to tell someone, you can call ChildLine (0800 1111) or go [online](#) and speak to someone in confidence.

Ignore it/Walk away/Pretend it doesn't bother you

Being able to walk away from bullying or act like it doesn't bother you is a good coping mechanism; it can show people you're confident and can deal with situations. But it's not always easy to pretend that you're okay when you're not. Even if you can hide your feelings from people, they're still there and you need to do something that will help you deal with them.

Block/report users online

If the bullying is happening online, you can instantly 'block' someone who is horrible to you, or delete or 'hide' what they say, even though that won't stop other people from seeing it. There are also steps you can take on social media sites, such as Facebook, where you can report language or behaviour which is offensive or aggressive. Often 'blocking' someone is enough and you might not feel the need to report them but, again, everyone is different and it will depend on your situation and what will make you feel better.

Keep a diary of what happens

Keeping a diary can be a really useful way of coping with how you're feeling; especially if you aren't ready to talk to someone about it. Recording incidents can also make it easier if you do decide to tell someone and it can act as evidence if other parties need to get involved

Ask them to stop

If you can do this then try it – the person bullying you might not know how their behaviour is affecting you, and it might change the way they behave towards you. But some people aren't so approachable and you might not have the confidence to speak to them, or you might be worried about what will happen if you do. If you feel this might make things worse then it's best to explore another option.





Procedures school will follow:

Our procedures will follow the D&G Council Incident Flow Chart (see Appendix 1)

- Anyone who feels that they are being bullied or suspects that someone is being bullied should report it to a member of staff or a member of the senior Leadership Team as appropriate
- When incidents of bullying have been reported this information should be shared with relevant staff (likely to be a member of the Senior Leadership Team), who will begin an investigation to establish the details of the incident. This may involve taking written accounts from all parties involved
- If a parent/carers has reported a concern relating to bullying they will be updated with the outcome of the information gathering process
- When students or staff have raised a concern relating to bullying they will also be kept informed of the outcome
- When bullying behaviours have taken place, appropriate consequences will be put in place. A first bullying offence is different to on-going or repeated bullying behaviour. Consequently, there will be a degree of professional judgement and agreement required when dealing with incidents
- Conventional consequences will be used, including: lunch detentions and loss of reward time. Following any allegation of bullying, once conventional consequences have been used, a restorative meeting will always be held, encouraging reflection on the behaviors displayed.
- Future preventative approaches will be used, including class discussions, changes to seating plans, group or class placement and working with those displaying bullying behavior to address any issues which may underlie the behaviour.
- The information gatherer will record all substantiated incidents on The Bullying and Equalities function within SEEMIS
- If the person experiencing bullying is a pupil, their parents will be informed of the action taken. If consequences are imposed on the pupil/s displaying bullying behaviours, their parents will also be informed
- Staff or other members of the school community who have raised a concern will also be kept informed of action being taken





- Where there are implications with regards to the law the advice of the police will be sought.
- The use of outside agencies may be considered e.g. CAMHS, Children and Family Services, Educational Psychologist in order to provide support/help for those experiencing/displaying bullying behaviour.
- The member of staff dealing with the incident will subsequently meet separately with both the person experiencing and the person displaying bullying behaviour to monitor/follow up on progress

If an incident is not considered to be bullying, there may still have been unacceptable behaviour. This should be dealt with according to the schools promoting Positive Behaviour Policy. In such cases, the person experiencing the behaviours may still benefit from support of some kind. Any involved parties, including parents, may be informed of this conclusion and any ensuing action.

When it's 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.

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 through the 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 Police Scotland if they feel a hate crime may have taken place.

Review and Engagement:

- This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis, and formally updated in 2024 (or sooner if required)
- The policy is available on the school website and will be issued annually to S1 pupils and any new enrolments
- A focus group to gather the views of students on the extent, nature and various outcomes of bullying will be carried out as part of our annual self-evaluation calendar



Appendix 1

