

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR LEARNING ESTABLISHMENTS

1.0 Statement of Principles

- 1.1 This policy aims to provide guidance for Education and Children's Services employees, partners and stakeholders in preventing and responding to incidents of bullying behaviour.
- 1.2 All children and young people have the right to learn in an environment that is free from bullying. In working to provide this, Education and Children's Services will enable them to fully develop the skills and confidence needed for life, work and for learning.
- 1.3 Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services define bullying as the following:

Bullying takes place when the actions of an individual or group of people cause harm to someone by taking advantage of an imbalance of power within a relationship (whether perceived or real). Bullying behaviour is abusive.

Bullying behaviour is often displayed as a result of past experiences which affect and impact on current actions.

Bullying can be verbal, physical, emotional or cyber. It can be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, persistent, or a one off incident. People who experience bullying behaviour feel vulnerable and/or socially isolated.

2.0 Policy Focus and Target Audience

- 2.1 This policy has been developed by the Youth Commission #Bullying in collaboration with an Advisory Panel. Research conducted identified existing good practice and informative data which was fundamental to the development of this policy. Relevant guidance documents are attached which will assist staff in preventing and managing bullying behaviour within Education and Children's Services establishments
- 2.2 The scope of this policy extends to all establishments and to all practitioners working within the framework of Curriculum for Excellence. This policy applies to all instances of bullying behaviour within establishments, between learners and between learners and staff. This policy also applies to instances of bullying behaviour which impact on learning and/or the learning environment.
- 2.3 This policy includes, but is not limited to, bullying and harassment on the grounds of Disability, Race, Sexual Orientation, Gender, Gender Reassignment and Religion.

3.0 Legal Framework

- 3.1 The Scottish Government is committed to supporting and promoting Children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2009) requires

Authorities to reduce barriers to learning. Aberdeenshire Council is obliged to meet the requirements of equalities legislation.

4.0 Policy Framework

- 4.1 This policy has been informed by *A National Approach to Anti Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People* (2010), and has been shaped by the national *Getting It Right For Every Child* strategy.
- 4.2 This policy replaces previous anti bullying guidance, policies and procedures adopted by Aberdeenshire Council, and those developed by individual establishments.

5.0 Policy Content

5.1 Schools must establish and publish an anti-bullying policy. This anti-bullying policy must reflect six key areas in providing an appropriate and robust approach in accordance with national guidance. These are:

- Stance - *Bullying in any form is unacceptable*
- Definition - *Bullying can be verbal, physical, emotional and cyber. It can be persistent or one off*
- Prevention - *Work to educate and raise awareness*
- Communication - *Communicating efforts to prevent and respond to incidents*
- Response – *adopt the '6 step approach'*
- Reporting and Monitoring - *Systems and processes are used to record and monitor incidents and overall levels of bullying behaviour.*

Full details of each of the above key areas are contained within the Anti-Bullying Guidance for Learning Establishments.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1 The implementation of this policy is endorsed in full by the Education, Learning and Leisure Committee. The Director of Education and Children's Services will oversee a planned roll out of the policy supported by Senior Education Officers and Heads of Establishments. The policy will be delivered by Education and Children's Services staff working in partnership with learners and their parents/carers.
- 6.2 Responsibility for monitoring the day to day working of this policy lies with the Heads of Establishments.
- 6.3 Responsibility for monitoring the strategic impact of this policy lies with a Senior Education Officer from the Education and Children's Services Directorate Management Team.

7 Staffing and Financial Implications

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out. It is included as an appendix, and no negative impact has been identified.
- 7.2 There will be staffing implication arising from this policy. Training however will be required, and will be provided through working in partnership with RespectMe and other agencies

- 7.3 Funding to support the implementation of this policy will be met from within existing budgets.
- 7.4 This policy will be reviewed after the first year of implementation and thereafter in accordance with Aberdeenshire Council Policy Review Protocol.

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2015