

Alloa Academy



ANTI – BULLYING POLICY 2009

Whole School Approach

- ❖ **Make Alloa Academy a ‘Telling School’**
- ❖ **Pupils should be made aware that retaliation is not acceptable**

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Alloa Academy

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1. Context

Bullying is said to be one of the fastest growing and most insidious problems faced by children. One child in ten is said to be bullied regularly, double the figure ten years ago. Around ten a year are driven to commit suicide and hundreds more contemplate it. In 2001 more than 20,000 children called Childline.

“The single most important thing a school can do to prevent bullying is to have a clear policy to which staff, pupils and parents are committed.....”

‘Action against Bullying’ – Scottish Office 1992

“Bullying will not be tolerated and must be rooted out and dealt with in our schools....” – Peter Peacock, Deputy Minister for Children and Education 1999.

“We can only raise attainment in our schools if they are places where teachers can teach and pupils can learn in a positive environment, free from distraction and disturbance.....” – Cathy Jamieson, Minister for Education and Young People 2002

Documents which have influenced the Anti-Bullying policy include:-

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Human Rights Act
- Standards in Scotland’s Schools (Scotland Act 2000)
- The Race Relations (Amendment Act 2000)

2) Values and Ethos

In our school we believe that young people can only flourish and succeed in an environment where they feel valued, respected and safe. Bullying is a major source of anxiety and unhappiness not only among young people, but also their parents.

We therefore believe there is a need for a positive partnership between pupils, parents and staff to demonstrate a commitment that bullying and the abuse of power is not acceptable.

Alloa Academy will not tolerate bullying of any form by young people or adults. We must therefore foster mutual respect and create a safe, caring school community, which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.

3) Definition

Bullying is where a person is made to feel

- Unhappy
- Insecure
- Threatened
- Excluded

by the repeated, persistent, wilful and conscious actions of others. It is the effect on the victim which truly defines bullying. It is an abuse of power.

Bullying can be in the form of:-

	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Indirect</u>
Physical	Hitting Kicking Spitting Throwing Objects	Persuading another person to assault someone
Non-Physical Verbal	Verbal insults Name calling	Persuading another person to insult someone Spreading malicious rumours
Non-Verbal	Threatening and obscene gestures	Removing and hiding belongings Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity

Cyberbullying

"Cyberbullying" is when a young person is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another young person using the Internet; online networking sites and emailing interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones.

Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying can involve physical or mental violence by a group or an individual. It is often aimed at someone who has poor defences and who, as a result, may be significantly upset. Victims may be male or female. What distinguishes it from other forms of bullying is the language that is used. Words like "queer" and "poof" and "lezzie" have been used abusively for many years. They have now been joined by words (such as "gay" and "lesbian") which were formerly descriptive but which now may be used as general insults. In some youth cultures, "gay" is now used as a derogatory adjective to describe objects and people that may have no connection whatsoever with homosexuality. Both boys and girls may be subjected to homophobic abuse.

Where and When Does Bullying Take Place?

Bullying can take place:-

- In the classroom
- In the corridors
- In the playground
- In isolated areas
- On the way to and from school
- At break times
- At lunchtimes
- Outside of school
- In Cyberspace

If we are bullied:-

- We may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated.
- Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer
- Our relationships with our family and friends may deteriorate
- We may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem

4. Aims and Objectives

Our anti-bullying policy should not be viewed as a standalone document. It is integral in promoting a positive ethos and attainment, as it impacts on every policy document in Alloa Academy.

“We aim to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying, and to promote an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in.”

“We recognise that bullying can only thrive in a climate of silence. We aim to encourage ‘speaking out’, by those who are bullied, by those who witness bullying and by those who hear about incidents of bullying.

We aim to tackle incidents of bullying systematically, consistently and efficiently. This will be achieved by:-

- Publicising our anti-bullying policy through the whole school community
- Recognising the need to have co-operation of all parents and families in stamping out bullying
- Having a shared expectation about how we treat and respect each other
- Having a coherent and consistent framework for addressing bullying issues
- Having a commitment to anti-bullying education

5. Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying

How are incidents reported?

We encourage people to speak out with confidence and to make the reporting of incidents as easy as possible. We aim to provide as many initial contacts as possible to give pupils the confidence to report incidents within the school.

Pupils may speak out by talking to:-

- their Guidance Teacher
- the Pupil Support Staff
- any other teacher or member of staff they feel comfortable approaching:
Subject Teachers, School Nurse, Community Link Worker,
- their peer mediators
- school prefects
- their friends
- their parents/guardians

In addition pupils will be able to self refer through the ‘worry box’ in the Pupil Support base.

Parents may contact the school through the appropriate SMT or guidance teacher.

How are incidents dealt with?

All bullying incidents will be treated seriously and appropriate responses will be made. The seriousness of the incident is measured by its **effect on the victim**. The bullying incident is recorded by Staff on the Alleged Bullying Incident Form ^{Appendix 1} and sent to Guidance Staff or appropriate member of the SMT. They will then decide whether or not to log it as a bullying incident on the Bullying Incident Form ^{Appendix 2}. All bullying incidents are logged and kept centrally on the computer in our 'Bullying Log.'

Throughout the process we aim to ensure:-

- The young person is involved in the discussion of the incident
- Records are completed for all incidents
- Regular communications take place with parents/guardians
- Records are shared and signed by young persons
- Interventions include opportunity to follow up and evaluate support and if necessary provide a further course of action
- Regular monitoring of incidents

When dealing with bullying incidents we will use many strategies including:-

(i) Conflict Resolution Approach

This is where we spend time with the young person's working through the conflict and aiming for a win/win situation

(ii) Common Concern Approach

This method is based on a treatment model and the assumption that each member of the bullying group wants the bullying to stop. The member of staff who is intervening avoids blaming anyone or arguing about facts. The pupils involved are normally interviewed separately, with the member of staff using five recommended steps. ^{Appendix 3}

(iii) Use of Exclusion/Isolation

Sometimes it is necessary for pupils to be isolated for a 'cooling off' period to contemplate their actions before a resolution can be made. Exclusion, on its own, rarely solves bullying behaviour. It is unlikely to be used as the only strategy.

(iv) Restorative Practice

This is where we spend time with the young persons working through the incident. It is a process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and the implications for the future. ^{Appendix 4}

At Alloa Academy we sometimes use a combination of strategies and adapt them to fit the circumstances of the particular incident.

6) Strategies for Prevention and Reduction of Bullying

We will promote behaviour to prevent and reduce bullying by the delivery of high quality teaching, well researched and up to date PHSE programme, and a well disciplined safe environment where the whole staff are committed to preventing and reducing bullying within Alloa Academy.

The Taught Curriculum

We use the curriculum to;

- Raise awareness about bullying
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach pupils how to manage their relationships with others constructively

We use the curriculum to explore issues;

- Why do people bully each other?
- What are the effects of bullying on the bullied, on bullies, and on bystanders?
- What can we do to stop bullying?
- Bullies have often been victims - Do we need to support them as well?

The Hidden Curriculum

We aim to promote the following strategies as much as possible:-

- Co-operative group work
- Befriending
- Peer support
- Mediation by adults
- Mediation by peers
- Whole school activities
- Lunch clubs
- After school club

Safe Environment

We will continue to follow existing discipline procedures to help promote a safe and happy environment for all at Alloa Academy.

We will continue to patrol isolated areas of the playground at break and lunchtimes and CCTV cameras are installed in these areas.

Pupil Support base is available for drop in before and after school and during break and lunchtimes.

7) **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways

- **Via the Bullying Central Log:**

The database will yield information such as: who was involved, the total numbers of each across the whole school and within year groups and where the bullying takes place. This will enable Alloa Academy to look for cross school patterns of bullying

- **Via an Annual Questionnaire:**

A sample of pupils, parents and staff will be asked to complete a questionnaire to help the school evaluate the policy's effectiveness.

- **Via Alloa Academy Website:**

Pupils and parents may contact the school through our school website.

8) Policy into Practice

At Alloa Academy we believe an Anti-Bullying policy will not be effective unless there is a commitment by the whole school community.

If we are to put this policy into practice then it requires

Staff to:-

- (i) arrive at class on time
- (ii) be role models at all times
- (iii) be aware of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- (iv) make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by being observant when moving around the school
- (v) take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
- (vi) provide support to children in need anywhere in the school
- (vii) report suspected incidents to the appropriate member of staff

Pupils to:-

- (i) not suffer in silence
- (ii) refuse to take part in any bullying
- (iii) if present when bullying occurs take some form of action
- (iv) speak out and tell a member of staff
- (v) help break the silence if they or others are being bullied

Remember bullying behaviour can only thrive in a climate of silence.

Parents/Guardians to:-

- (i) watch for signs of distress in their young person e.g. unwillingness to attend school, pattern of headaches, damaged clothes or bruising
- (ii) take an active interest in their young person's social life and acquaintances including contacts via texts, email and chat rooms
- (iii) advise their young person to tell a member of staff
- (iv) advise the school through the appropriate guidance teacher or year head
- (v) keep a written record (who, what, where, when, how)
- (vi) not encourage their young person to retaliate
- (vii) be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying, even if their young person is not directly involved

If staff, pupils and parents work together we can reduce and prevent bullying at Alloa Academy.

Appendix 2

Bullying Incident Form

To be filled out by Guidance/SMT

Name of Victim: _____		Class: _____	
Ethnicity: _____		Gender: _____	
Does pupil have ASN	Yes/No/Not Known		
Name(s) and Class of Perpetrator(s): _____			
Date of Incident: _____		Signed _____	
Nature of Bullying		Where	
Name calling	_____	Class	_____
Threatening	_____	Corridor	_____
Violence	_____	Playground	_____
Cyber	_____	Cyberspace	_____
Sexual Orientation	_____	Other	_____
Sexual	_____		
Gender	_____		
Disability	_____		
Race	_____	<i>(RAHMAS protocol)</i>	
Religion/Belief	_____		
Other <i>(specify)</i>	_____		
<i>(Write full details overleaf if appropriate)</i>			
Action taken <i>(with dates)</i>			
Counselling	_____		
Parental Involvement	_____		
Help sheets issued	_____		
Referred to SMT	_____		
Referred to Guidance	_____		
Pupil recalled for update	_____		
Peer mediation	_____		
Restorative Practice	_____		
<i>(Write full notes overleaf if appropriate)</i>			

Action by Guidance/SMT:

Please pass to office to be logged on 'Central Bullying Log'

Action by Office:

Please log on 'Central Bullying Log' and pass original back to J Bryce. Please also photocopy original and pass to the Guidance Teachers of all pupil concerned, to be filed in the PPR.

Appendix 3

Common Concern Approach

Anatol Pikas, Professor of Psychology has pioneered what he calls ‘the common concern approach’ for tackling bullying. Using this method, children are brought together to try to work out a mutually agreeable way to deal with bullying.

The purpose of this method is to get the children who are bullying to arrive at a common feeling of concern for the victim(s) and to use this concern to change the behaviour and to develop empathy.

The adult should use the following five steps:

Step 1 Low-Key start

‘I would like to talk with you because I’ve heard that you’ve been bothering....’

Step 2 Agreement

‘What do you know about it?’

Step 3 – Going Forward – No Recriminations

‘All right, we’ve talked about it long enough for now’

Step 4 - Solving it

What to do? What do you suggest?’

Step 5 – Trusting the Bully

That’s good. We’ll meet again in a week and you can tell me how you’ve been getting on.

Appendix 4

RESTORATIVE CONVERSATIONS

What

- Restorative Conversations can be used on a daily basis to address misconducts or a breach of rules, that may have affected or harmed others, but where there is no immediate or identifiable person who has been harmed.

When

- A Restorative Conversation should be used as soon as possible after the event has taken place.
- When you want to challenge someone's behaviour, or explore the effects someone's behaviour has had on others.
- When a formal Restorative Practice is not required, as there has not been anyone formally harmed.

Where

- In a private room or location.

Why

- To address a person's unacceptable behaviour.
- To instil social skills and empathy.
- To prevent the situation from happening again.

How

- By using a 3 Stage Process: FACTS (What happened)
CONSEQUENCES (Who was affected)
FUTURE (How can this be prevented from happening again)

People will only change their behaviour if they learn how to. By asking people to tell you what happened, the consequences of their actions and how they can prevent this happening again teaches people to take personal responsibility for their action, thus creating a learning curve. By telling someone their behaviour is not acceptable or telling them that they did..... will only give you an answer ending in 'off' or 'it wasn't me!' which leads to denial, therefore learning nothing from being challenged.

Restorative Conversations allows people to be challenged in a positive manner and learning something in the process.