



LANGHOLM ACADEMY

ANTI - BULLYING POLICY

AUGUST 2008

Rationale

Langholm Academy is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Our school values state that bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Aims

The aims of our anti-bullying policy are to prevent bullying and to deal effectively with bullying should it occur.

Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour which can be defined as a repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal by those who wish to gain power over others. Bullying is not easy to define and can take many different forms. It may include physical aggression, intimidation, threatening, extorting, pressurising, name calling or teasing. Less obvious things such as ignoring or excluding someone can often cause more damage.

Some of these forms of bullying can be exerted through ICT and mobile phones, particularly if either can generate pictures.

Stress and fear can affect a child's health. Symptoms can include anxiety, headaches, sleepless nights, stomach upsets, loss of confidence/self-esteem and depression.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic relating to or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

The whole school community has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should respond if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be followed up.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents, staff and pupils have a duty to deal with any bullying issues which they become aware of either through direct reporting or observation.

Parents

In circumstances where parents become aware of a bullying incident they should contact the Head Teacher or Deputies immediately in school. Parents should be prepared to provide as much evidence as possible including names, incident details etc. which may be asked for in writing. If parents continue to be aware that the bullying is ongoing, they should continue to alert the school.

Pupils

In circumstances where pupils become aware of a bullying incident they should contact any member of teaching staff immediately in school. Pupils should be prepared to provide as much evidence as possible including names, incident details etc. which may be asked for in writing. If they continue to be aware that the bullying is ongoing, they should continue to alert teachers.

Staff

Any member of staff who witnesses an incident, or to whom an incident has been reported

1. should talk with the bullied pupil to ascertain:

- as many facts as possible
- what was said
- what happened
- when it happened
- witnesses
- any previous incidents

If a member of staff lacks confidence in dealing with such a matter, they should pass the matter on immediately to PT Pupil Support who will initiate the investigative process.

2. The process of talking with the pupil must result in an action plan with the bullied child which may involve a variety of strategies, depending on the situation. This action plan might typically include discussing the bullying matter with the offending pupil or pupils insisting that the bullying stops; informing the parents of the offending

pupil(s); arranging a meeting between “the bullied” and “the offender(s)”; alerting staff to bullying incidents that affect pupils inviting staff to maintain a watchful ‘eye’ in class and school in general; initiating sanctions (verbal warnings, punishment exercises, alternatives to exclusion, exclusion, removal of ‘privileges’); moving class to minimise the opportunities for bullying. Pupils may also be informed that they can contact **Childline** in complete confidence.

3 Promoting positive behaviour strategies for the bully which may entail: role modelling; monitoring conduct in school; engagement of other agencies; reflection on their actions and changing behaviours.

4 Monitoring the situation on an ongoing basis with both the victim(s) and perpetrator(s). This may typically involve: establishing daily contacts; providing a safe place for the bullied to go; providing a bully log form to detail further incidents should they arise; establishing and maintaining contacts with parents as appropriate; providing peer support situations etc etc

Recording of Incidents

Recording of all bullying incidents must be detailed on Langholm Academy’s Phoenix incident manager system. This would typically include accurate details of incident, action taken and outcome details. This responsibility lies with the person who undertakes and investigation and ongoing support and monitoring. The spirit of this recording rests with the person who deals with the matter.

Authority Policy Statement and Guide to schools

Further support is included in the “Anti –bullying policy” (undated) produced by officials of Dumfries and Galloway Council. It is appended at the back of this policy.

Review

This policy was drawn up by J McFadyen and A Mann (August 2008) and will be reviewed on an annual basis from that date.

- **Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- 1) The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- 2) In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- 3) If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- 4) After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

We will use methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters