



**Carrick
Knowe**



FHS



Gylemuir



Murrayburn

Forrester High School Cluster

Equality, Diversity and Anti Bullying Policy and Procedures

December 2012

The Policy

Purpose

The policy exists to protect all children, young people and staff within the Forrester High School Cluster from all form of unacceptable behaviours by other children and young people.

The emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of achieving the outcomes that our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed and become:

- successful learners
- confident individuals
- effective contributors and
- responsible citizens, enabling them to have improved life chances

Values and Beliefs

- All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included.
- Our shared values of mutual respect between staff and pupils, high expectations of success within a caring and supportive environment form the basis of our positive schools ethos. Within our wider school communities, we promote tolerance and understanding of one another and value diversity.
- We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination.
- We recognise the effects that bullying and discrimination can have on pupils' feelings of worth, on their school work and in the community. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals.

- We recognise that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on account of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked – after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio economic status or any combination of these.

Definitions

Bullying

- Bullying can make you feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. Something only needs to happen once for you to feel worried or scared to go to school or other places you enjoy going to. Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is doesn't mean its not bullying.
- Bullying is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects. People who are bullied are upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.
- Cyber-bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging and social networking websites.

Equalities

- We use the legal definition of 'equalities' which gives protection to people who have specific characteristics – for example; being gay, lesbian or bisexual or from a minority ethnic group or disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone undergoing gender change, as well as those or particular faith groups. The *Equality Act 2010* defines these as 'protected groups'. Looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from poor backgrounds are also included as equalities groups.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for the introduction and implementation of this policy. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents/carers must play an active part in the development and maintenance of the policy and in its success. Teachers and support staff are expected to be proactive, to treat all allegations seriously and to refer reports of incidents to other staff as appropriate, who will maintain accurate appropriate records.

Pupils are expected to:

- Behave in ways which do not upset others or put others in a state of fear or alarm.
- Report all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that other children may be afraid to report.

- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Parents/carers can help by:

- Supporting anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of our school communities.
- Monitoring closely their child's use of mobile phone and the internet and intervening if there is a suspicion that these are being used inappropriately helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.
- Speaking to an appropriate member of staff if they have any concerns about bullying of their child or of another child/children.
- Speaking to the Head Teacher if their concerns continue following school staff's intervention.
- Making use of the school's complaints procedure/City of Edinburgh Council's Advice and Conciliation service if concerns continue following the Head Teacher's intervention.

All school staff are expected to be proactive, to treat all allegations seriously and keep records.

- Questioning, understanding and learning what bullying behaviour is.
- Building the capacity of young people to challenge prejudice and bullying behaviour.

Leadership Teams are expected to;

- Monitor and report annually on the implementation of this policy.
- Supervise the review and updating of this policy at least every four years.

Concerns, Complaints... and Compliments

We recognise that there may be times when parents/carers feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we ask that this be brought to the Head Teacher's notice. If the Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents/carers can raise their concerns more formally through the school's Complaints Procedure. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then the matter can be referred to the Department's *Advice and Conciliation Service*. We are also pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well.

Communicating Our Policy

- This Equality, Diversity and Anti-bullying policy is available to all pupils, parents/carers and school staff on our school website and the school office.
- Anti-Bullying information and guidance is issued to all our pupils annually.

- We provide guidance and support to our pupils to explain what they should do if they are being bullied, or as responsible citizens, they see another pupil being bullied.
- Particular reference is made to this policy and procedures guidance with all new staff during their induction.

Evaluating Our Policy

We evaluate this policy using the following measures:

- The number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying in P7 and S2 through periodic questionnaires.
- Monitor patterns of absence.
- From the comments made and received from parents/carers and by visitors and other people connected with the school.
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed every 4 years.
- We make annual returns as required by the local authority and discuss comparisons year on year.