



Policy for Promoting Positive Relationships and Tackling Bullying Behaviour

January 2023
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Promoting Positive Relationships

Rationale & Underpinning Principles

All schools have a responsibility for the personal and social welfare of young people. Developing and encouraging positive relationships and behaviour in the classroom environment, playground and community is central to ensuring the best environment for effective learning and teaching. At Canberra we recognise that children will develop the self-confidence, resilience and positive self-view required to develop positive relationships and be successful, where their needs are met and they are encouraged to be respected and respectful, inclusive of others, feel safe and secure and have their achievements celebrated.

Our policy and practice is underpinned by the idea that all behaviour is communication. This allows for a child-centred approach leading to positive solutions to support children's distressed behaviour. A developed understanding of attachment theory and the six principles of nurture permeate school life at Canberra:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- Nurture is important for the development of wellbeing
- Language is understood as a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- Transitions are significant in the lives of children

Attachment informed practice and *nurturing approaches* support our thinking when selecting interventions. This can be immediate in the way we respond in the moment through the words used, the body language shown and the de-escalation techniques employed or it can be as part of a planned strategy to help a child regulate and manage their emotions, develop their resilience and handle situations that they find challenging.

Staff training in attachment and nurturing approaches takes place annually.

More information about attachment informed practice can be found on the school website: www.canberra-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk

Policy Aims

Our relationships policy aims to:

- develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships between children, their peers and adults
- ensure high standards of behaviour,
- inspire pupil motivation and self-esteem,
- improve attendance,

- nurture partnerships and support communication with all parties.

School Ethos

At Canberra we are committed to developing strategies which promote positive behaviour and reward achievement. The ethos of the school determines our effectiveness. Ethos may be defined as the outward expression in terms of the quality of interpersonal relationships of a school's aims, beliefs and values.

At Canberra a climate of care and concern in which our young people and staff are nurtured, valued and respected permeates every day life.

We strive to create a safe environment where there is mutual respect, equality of opportunity and co-operation. Everyone involved with the school; children, parents, teachers, support staff, Early Years staff and visitors, have a part to play in creating an atmosphere that allows children to thrive and feel safe. They also share the responsibility of helping to identify those in need of support.

School Vision, Aims and Values

Our shared school Vision, Aims and Values underpin our school ethos and are central to our view of ourselves as a school community.

Vision

Nurturing, Inspiring, Striving and Working Together at Canberra and Beyond

Aims

To promote a culture of hard work, dedication and Growth Mindset

To create an innovative and flexible learning environment that encourages achievement for all

To encourage a school community where everyone feels they belong and no-one is left out

To ensure that we all have the confidence and skills to maximise our potential

Values

Belonging, Respect, Inclusion, Honesty, Happiness, Safety

Positive strategies and structures

Promoting Positive Relationships

At Canberra we have developed a variety of strategies for promoting positive relationships, encouraging positive behaviours and preventing bullying. There

Nurturing, Inspiring, Striving and Working Together at Canberra and Beyond

are many examples of good practice being used to reinforce the school's caring ethos and to provide our children with clear and effective models of behaviour.

These include:

- Classroom and playground charters,
- PATHs lessons
- Whole school assemblies
- Class based reflection charts,
- Class based awards systems
- Structured playground activities,
- Peer mediation
- Nurture sessions
- Additional support for learning

Our school takes every opportunity to celebrate success, boost the self-esteem of all and encourage our children to be *Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors*.

These include:

- Weekly Four Capacities certificates;
- Achievement wall;
- Class of the Month wall;
- Pupil council, Eco-committee, Sports committee, Health committee, Library committee, Rights committee weekly sessions;
- Nursery-P3 activity sessions;
- Monitors, P1/P7 buddies, Reading buddies;
- Leadership opportunities such as P6 lunch club, pupil led extra curricular clubs;
- Extra curricular clubs;
- House events and House points.

Class/Playground and Lunch Charters

In order to embed Right Based Learning in our school; the rules have been replaced with charters. These promote positive relationships and a climate of respect where everyone is treated with dignity.

Each class creates their own Class Charter at the beginning of each year. Rights and Responsibilities are chosen and displayed within the classroom.

A Playground Charter was created in consultation with the Rights Respecting Committee and is displayed in the playground. House points are given by the House Captains to children who go ***above and beyond*** in the playground and contribute to the House points total for each House. The points are counted termly and the winning House chooses a reward from the agreed list.

A Lunch Charter was created by the Rights Respecting Committee after consultation with all children in school and is displayed in the Lunch Hall.

All staff should refer to school charters and values when discussing behaviour with a pupil.

Curriculum

The curriculum, both formal and informal, is the vehicle for promoting positive relationships, appropriate behaviours and reinforcing the anti-bullying message. Health & Wellbeing, Technologies and Religious Education programmes inform children about their own and others wellbeing, the acceptance of individual differences (P4 topic 'Accept'), developing a Growth Mindset and the importance and application of safe and respectful online activity. Children also explore how to get help whether as a result of face to face or online bullying behaviour. These programmes encourage open discussion in a trusting atmosphere. Role play situations allow for open and frank exploration of the issue of relationships, emotions and bullying with pupil-determined solution focused outcomes. Children are encouraged to develop empathy and resilience through these programmes as they consider scenarios and place themselves in the shoes of different characters, helping them to see things from a range of perspectives.

Health and Wellbeing permeates all aspects of life at Canberra and children are encouraged to embody our vision and values in their daily interactions with each other and the adults who teach and support them. Our Inter disciplinary learning programmes link to the UNCRC Rights of the child and the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics, encouraging children to explore themes which make them more inclusive and to have a deeper understanding of the differences and similarities of individuals and groups different to themselves. Our Rights Committee promotes the Rights of the Child and everyone in the school community is encouraged to reflect on and apply these Rights.

Tackling Bullying Behaviour

Rationale

'In order to thrive and achieve their full potential, children and young people need learning environments which are safe, nurturing, respectful and free from fear, abuse and discrimination' (Scottish Government; Respect for All, 2017)

This sentiment is echoed by South Lanarkshire Council, which is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments. The Council's Policy 'Treat Me Well' can be found on the South Lanarkshire Council website.

Bullying is a breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In Scotland, bullying is defined thus:

'Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online.' (Scottish Government, Respect for All, 2017)

At Canberra Primary we share the Scottish Government and South Lanarkshire Council vision that bullying is never acceptable and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment.

We are committed to challenging all types of prejudiced-based bullying and language, including in relation to the nine protected characteristics detailed within the Equality Act (2010):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Policy Aims

Our anti-bullying policy aims to:

- provide an environment where our children will learn and develop free from bullying;
- provide a consistent and coherent approach in dealing with and preventing bullying behaviour;
- develop the skills and resilience of young people and their parents to prevent and/or respond to bullying behaviour;

- ensure that every child who needs help will know who can help them and what support is available.

Strategies to prevent and respond to bullying

A range of strategies to prevent and respond to bullying behaviour have been developed in consultation with children, parents/carers and staff.

These include:

- a whole school focus on GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child);
- a focus on wellbeing and anti-bullying through our Health and Wellbeing curriculum, assemblies, pupil wellbeing surveys, school display, focused anti-bullying weeks;
- Peer mediation;
- parent leaflet and website links;
- ‘worry’ boxes;
- staff training;
- access to policy documents via the school website;
- parent meetings.

A Strategy for Handling Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

Supporting children experiencing bullying behaviour

All staff will adhere to the same conduct when supporting children experiencing bullying behaviour. Information regarding situations will be shared with members of staff as appropriate to enable them to support individuals.

Expectations of staff

Staff must

- recognise the impact on the child;
- recognise that the child may feel more vulnerable having spoken about their experience;
- never underestimate the ‘power of peers’; their reaction to bullying behaviour or its disclosure may influence the young person’s decision on how to react;
- accept the young person’s fear of reprisals as genuine;
- accept that confidentiality for some young people is a concern.

Staff responsibilities

Staff should

- reassure the child that it is right to talk to someone about having been bullied;
- remind the child that they have the right to feel safe within the school environment;

- explore a range of choices so that they feel in control and comfortable with the future course of action;
- assure the young person that the bullying behaviour will be addressed and that the situation will be dealt with in a proactive way;
- reassure the young person that they will not be expected to confront the person/s carrying out the bullying behaviour unless they wish to do so;
- provide regular opportunities for feedback both from and to the child about progress
- log all reported incidents and include sign off and next steps;
- ensure that the child is involved in constructing and implementing an action plan;
- ensure that any action taken doesn't prompt reprisals;
- explore the possibility of support from other children who have experienced bullying behaviour in the past;
- work towards building a support network for the child;
- seek all available opportunities to empower the child;
- monitor and review the situation and check with the child that they feel adequately supported.

Involving Parents

As partners in education, parents are an integral part of the process of handling incidents of bullying behaviour. Parents may feel confused, worried and upset if their child is being bullied.

At Canberra Primary we can work with parents to resolve a bullying situation by:

- emphasising to parents that the incident is being taken seriously;
- reminding parents of the school's procedures for dealing with reports of bullying;
- allowing parents to give a full account of the incident from their point of view;
- sharing the report of the incident with parents in the presence of the child;

Responsibilities of parents/carers:

- contribute to the construction of the action plan, discussing it with their child and informing them of the staff who will be supporting their child after the incident;
- keep the school informed of any further incidents which may come to their attention;
- agree a review date to monitor the plan effectiveness;
- work with the school to provide support to their child to develop their resilience, self-esteem and ability to self manage or seek help when faced with bullying behaviour;

- be aware that not all incidents of bullying behaviour will be reported to parents because we respect the rights and wishes of the child.

Responsibilities of children

- share their feelings and worries;
- give their ideas for the action plan;
- engage with support and advice given;
- engage in learning and experiences about wellbeing and anti-bullying;
- say no and report or challenge unacceptable behaviour;
- use computers responsibly;
- understand that it is an act of courage to report bullying behaviour.

Changing Behaviour and Attitudes

Supporting children engaging in bullying behaviour

All staff will adhere to the same conduct when supporting children displaying bullying behaviour. Information regarding situations will be shared with members of staff as appropriate to enable them to support individuals and to help them identify patterns of behaviour to appreciate the bigger picture.

Expectations of staff

Staff must:

- recognise that each child has needs;
- remain impartial and keep the focus of the meeting on the bullying behaviour. don't label the child, it is the behaviour that is unacceptable not the child;
- consider that the behaviour may be a reaction to their own experience of being bullied;
- always ask open, non-judgmental, non-leading questions;
- be prepared to re-frame excuses and avoidance of behaviour in a calm manner.

Staff responsibilities

- let the alleged perpetrator know what is known about the bullying behaviour;
- remind the child that other pupils have the right to feel safe in the school and that their behaviour is unacceptable (school vision, values and expected code of conduct);
- listen carefully to the child's explanation of the situation;
- use restorative approaches which allow for a supported discussion and reparations to be made;
- elicit an apology and an assurance that the behaviour will not be repeated;

- appropriate aspects of the action plan should be shared (on a need to know basis);
- involve the child in developing an action plan which helps them to change their behaviour and provides the necessary support to do so and arrange review dates to follow up on support/behaviour (when appropriate);
- contact parents and involve them in supporting their child's change in behaviour (when appropriate);
- if necessary involve other professionals e.g. behaviour support.

Involving Parents

As partners in education, parents support the process of handling incidents of bullying behaviour. The parents of a child who is bullying may not recognise the seriousness of the situation, may feel upset that their child has engaged in bullying behaviour or may act in a hostile and dismissive manner.

At Canberra Primary we support parents whose children have been involved in bullying behaviour by;

- explaining what constitutes bullying, its effect and why bullying is totally unacceptable;
- detail an accurate account of the behaviour that has occurred;
- describe the support that the school can offer to support their child in changing the behaviour.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

- reinforce the message that bullying behaviour is unacceptable;
- support their child in recognising and taking responsibility for their behaviour;
- when required, engage in creating and implementing a supportive action plan for their child;
- agree a review date to monitor the effectiveness of the plan.

Responsibilities of the child

- recognise and take responsibility for their behaviour;
- act in a respectful way towards the other child;
- when required, contribute to the support plan;
- seek help when required;
- engage in learning and experiences about wellbeing and anti-bullying.

Monitoring and Recording

A system of recording and monitoring incidents of bullying behaviour is essential and should allow the school to:

- track particular pupils and incidents to a satisfactory conclusion;
- identify types of bullying behaviour;
- identify stages where bullying may occur;
- target resources;
- supply returns to the Authority when needed.

In Canberra Primary there is a clear procedure for monitoring and recording bullying:

- when an allegation of bullying is made an anti-bullying pro-forma is opened and passed to Senior Management for completion;
- pupil and parent comments and sign off are recorded on the pro-forma
- all further incidents are recorded;
- the allegation is investigated and action plans are constructed in consultation with parents (as required);
- the allegation is recorded and tracked on SEEMIS;
- review dates are arranged to follow up with victim and child displaying bullying behaviour;
- where necessary other professionals are involved and their input monitored and reviewed.

Useful resources

Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People (Scottish Government, 2017)

<https://respectme.org.uk/>

www.childline.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk