



CARGILFIELD

Anti-Bullying Policy

Opening Statement

Cargilfield School is made up of the Pre-Prep and Nursery (for pupils aged 3-8 years) and the Upper School (for pupils aged 8-13 years), collectively referred to in this policy as 'the School' and the principles here should apply to children of all ages. This policy also applies to all members of the School Community and is available on the School's website and, on request, from the School Office. A shorter, child-friendly version of this policy will be created together with a group of selected children to produce an "Anti-bullying Children's Charter."

The provision of the School's anti-bullying policy, set alongside the School's behaviour policy and the pastoral care system, is essential for fulfilling our School's 'visions, values and aims':

"Cargilfield is a family school, shaped by our pupils, staff, parents, alumni and friends. We invest in these relationships to create a strong community and the feeling of a home from home. We treat others with respect. Our approach is inclusive and we celebrate diversity."

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibility under the 2010 Equality Act and has been guided by the Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying set out by the Scottish Government (2017), the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Why We Need an Anti-Bullying Policy

Our physical and emotional welfare is the essential foundation upon which our learning and personal development grows and flourishes. Bullying can have severe emotional, psychological and physical effects on the victim, leading to anxiety, depression, decreased self-esteem, and sometimes even self-harm or suicidal thoughts. Bullying is one of the largest preventable causes of mental health issues. It is crucial for the school to address bullying promptly, create a supportive environment, and educate individuals to prevent and combat such harmful behaviour.

This policy is particularly focused on the children at Cargilfield and applies at all times when they are in or out of School, online or in person, during term-time or in the holidays. Essentially, it applies at any time when they are members of the School.

We do, however, also expect all adults within our School community to set a standard of behaviour which makes clear that bullying is unacceptable in any context.

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I. Clarify Definitions

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a repeated, aggressive behaviour that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. It can take various forms, including verbal (name-calling, teasing), physical (hitting, pushing), social (spreading rumours, excluding) and cyberbullying (using digital platforms to harass or intimidate).

Key elements of bullying include:

1. **Repetition:** bullying often involves a pattern of behaviour over time, rather than a one-off incident.
2. **Intent:** The actions are purposeful, intending to cause harm, fear, or distress to the target.
3. **Power imbalance:** The bully has an advantage or influence over the person being bullied, making it difficult for the target to defend themselves effectively.

Further definitions:

Online bullying

Online bullying, also known as cyberbullying, refers to the use of digital communication tools such as social media, messaging apps, emails, online forums, or gaming platforms to harass, intimidate, or humiliate others. It can differ in several significant ways from face to face bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

The nature of online interactions can mean that the boundaries between home and school can become blurred. In some instances, an out of school incident could involve the school and be dealt with in line with this Anti-Bullying policy and the School Behaviour policy.

If an incident occurs with a pupil of a different school, the Headmaster will contact the other school to progress a resolution. The School's separate ICT, Storage and Management of Information Policy sets out the School rules about the use of technology including mobile electronic devices.

Online safety is at the heart of the School's curriculum. Children and parents are regularly informed of online safety issues and the School's strategies to safeguard pupils.

Discriminatory Behaviour

Discriminatory behaviour involves treating individuals or groups unfairly based on certain characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, disability, or other protected attributes. It involves prejudice, bias, and unequal treatment, often resulting in disadvantages, marginalisation, or harm to the targeted individuals or groups.

Types of discriminatory behaviour include:

1. **Racial Discrimination:** Treating someone differently based on their race, ethnicity, or nationality.
2. **Gender Discrimination:** Unfair treatment due to a person's gender or gender identity.
3. **Age Discrimination:** Unjust actions directed at individuals based on their age, often seen in workplaces or societal contexts.
4. **Sexual Orientation Discrimination:** Unfair treatment due to a person's sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or other.
5. **Body image Discrimination:** Unkind treatment due to a person's body shape, size or appearance of their body.
6. **Religious Discrimination:** Bias or prejudice against a person or group based on their religious beliefs or practices.
7. **Disability Discrimination:** Treating individuals less favourably due to their physical or mental disabilities.
8. **Socio-economic Discrimination:** Unfair treatment based on a person's financial status or social class.
9. **Discrimination based on Nationality or Immigration Status:** Unfair treatment based on a person's nationality, immigration status, or place of origin.

Harmful Sexual Behaviours

Sexual bullying, also known as sexual harassment or sexual intimidation, is a form of bullying that involves unwelcome sexual advances, comments, or behaviours directed at a person without their consent. It can occur in various settings, including at school, online platforms, or social gatherings.

Key features of sexual bullying include:

1. **Unwanted Sexual Advances:** Inappropriate comments, gestures, or actions of a sexual nature that cause discomfort or distress to the recipient.
2. **Sexual Comments or Jokes:** Making sexual comments, jokes, or remarks about a person's appearance, body, or personal life.
3. **Unwanted Touching or Groping:** Inappropriate physical contact or touching without consent, which can range from touching to groping.
4. **Sexual Coercion:** Pressuring someone into engaging in sexual acts or behaviour against their will through threats, manipulation, or intimidation.
5. **Sexual Harassment Online:** Using digital platforms to send and forward explicit messages, images, or videos without consent.

2. Possible Signs of Bullying

Recognising the signs of bullying is crucial in addressing the issue promptly and providing support to those affected. Some possible signs that someone may be experiencing bullying are:

1. Emotional Changes:

- Sudden mood swings or unexplained emotional distress.
- Anxiety, fearfulness, or signs of depression.
- Expressing feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or helplessness.

2. Physical Symptoms:

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries.
- Frequent complaints of headaches, stomach-aches, or other physical ailments without a clear medical cause.

3. Changes in Behaviour:

- Avoidance of specific places, activities, or people.
- Decreased interest in school, declining grades, or loss of interest in hobbies.

4. Social Isolation:

- Loss of friends or sudden reluctance to socialize, appearing withdrawn.
- Difficulty making or maintaining friendships.

5. Changes in Academic Performance:

- Decline in academic performance or sudden loss of interest in schoolwork.
- Skipping classes or school altogether.

6. Loss of Belongings:

- Frequently losing personal items without explanation.

7. Emotional Outbursts:

- Displays of anger, frustration, or irritability seemingly out of character.

8. Changes in Sleep or Eating Patterns:

- Difficulty sleeping, bed-wetting, reluctance to go to bed or experiencing nightmares.
- Changes in eating habits, such as loss of appetite or overeating.

9. Low Self-Esteem:

- Expressing negative self-talk or self-deprecating comments.
- Expressing a lack of confidence or diminished self-esteem.

10. Cyberbullying Indicators:

- Becoming upset or anxious during or after using digital devices.
- Avoiding discussions about online activities or being secretive about online interactions.

3. Preventative Measures

a) Anti-Bullying Culture

At Cargilfield, we aim to collectively work to prevent and address bullying effectively. It involves fostering attitudes, behaviours and systems that prioritise kindness, respect, empathy and inclusion - aiming to eliminate bullying and its harmful effects.

Through its Health and Wellbeing lessons and Form Time discussions, the school promotes the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) and the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators:

Safe – growing up in an environment where a child or young person feels secure, nurtured, listened to and enabled to develop to their full potential. This includes freedom from abuse or neglect.

Healthy – having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices.

Achieving – being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.

Nurtured – growing, developing and being cared for in an environment which provides the physical and emotional security, compassion and warmth necessary for healthy growth and to develop resilience and a positive identity.

Active – having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.

Respected – being involved in and having their voices heard in decisions that affect their life, with support where appropriate.

Responsible – having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision.

Included – having help to overcome inequalities and being accepted as part of their family, school and community.

Education and awareness of these eight indicators together within the School's anti-bullying policy, will allow a holistic view of each child at the school. The School will foster a culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion as well as to encourage open dialogue and communication, making it safe for individuals to report incidents and to express concerns.

i) Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

The School is in the process of developing Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, who will set an example by promoting respectful behaviour, address incidents promptly and reinforce anti-bullying values. Starting from F6, we envisage a group of around 2-4 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in each senior year group, who will receive training and be awarded a special tie to distinguish and elevate their role within the community (see appendix 2 for role description).

ii) The Children's Charter

One role for the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, will be to create a child-friendly version of the Anti-Bullying Policy, which will change as necessary. Known as "The Children's Charter" its function will be to establish clear and accessible anti-bullying policies outlining expected behaviour, consequences of bullying, and reporting procedures.

b) Reporting Procedures

Reporting bullying is encouraged, supported, and will be met with appropriate actions to create a safe and inclusive environment. There are multiple reporting options:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <u>Adults</u> | <u>Students</u> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form Teachers• Teachers• Trusted adults• Parents or carers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prefects• Divisional Leaders (pupils)• Anti-Bullying Ambassadors (pupils)• Friends (pupils) |
| <u>Anonymous reporting</u> | |

Reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and appropriate action will be taken to address the situation.

c) Initial Response

It is important that any child reporting an incident of bullying feels in control of the situation. While they may be keen for action to be taken, it may also be appropriate to offer the child a safe space to discuss the situation and be involved in deciding next steps. It may be that some advice as to how to respond to unkindness will allow a child to manage the situation themselves. In this circumstance, it is important that a trusted adult check in again with the child to see how things have progressed and be ready to move on to investigate the details of the allegation.

d) Investigation and Intervention

Confidentiality will be offered to the extent possible while conducting a full investigation, emphasizing that reporting individuals will be protected from retaliation.

The reported incidents will be thoroughly investigated, involving gathering evidence, speaking with witnesses, and addressing the concerns raised. Full documentation of all reported incidents will be made on our internal data management system (ISAMS).

The reporting individual will be kept informed about the progress of the investigation and any outcomes or actions taken.

A potential range of consequences will be clarified for those found responsible for bullying, which may include disciplinary action, counselling or restorative practices, in tandem with the School's behaviour policy.

e) Restorative Practices

This approach is built on values which separate the person from the behaviour, and aim to address harm, conflicts, or wrongdoing in a constructive and healing manner. The primary goal is to restore relationships, promote understanding, and prevent future incidents by emphasizing empathy, dialogue and accountability.

A “restorative conversation” can occur between those involved, mediated by an appropriate member of staff, to reach mutually agreeable solutions. It may be conducted with varying degrees of formality and may include just those students most directly involved or a whole year group.

In the spirit of personal responsibility, forgiveness and commitment to positive future behaviour, both the victim and the pupil who exhibits bullying behaviour express their acceptance of the proposed solution. The School will strive for a consensus involving all affected parties in determining resolutions and outcomes, such as apologies, behaviour agreements, community service, disciplinary sanctions, or other forms of restitution.

Transforming conflicts into opportunities for growth, learning, and improved relationships helps foster a positive environment and build a strong sense of community.

The way in which adults react to bullying contributes to the ethos of the School and can help to make it more or less likely that bullying will happen in the future. Ignoring the problem can cause bullying to continue, while a heavy-handed approach can drive it underground. However, a positive, open response could promote a “reporting culture”, encourage our young people to be “upstanders”, and contribute to a positive, trustful and more caring community.

f) Support Systems

Appropriate support and follow-up will be provided to the reporting individual, the victim and the bully throughout and after the resolution process.

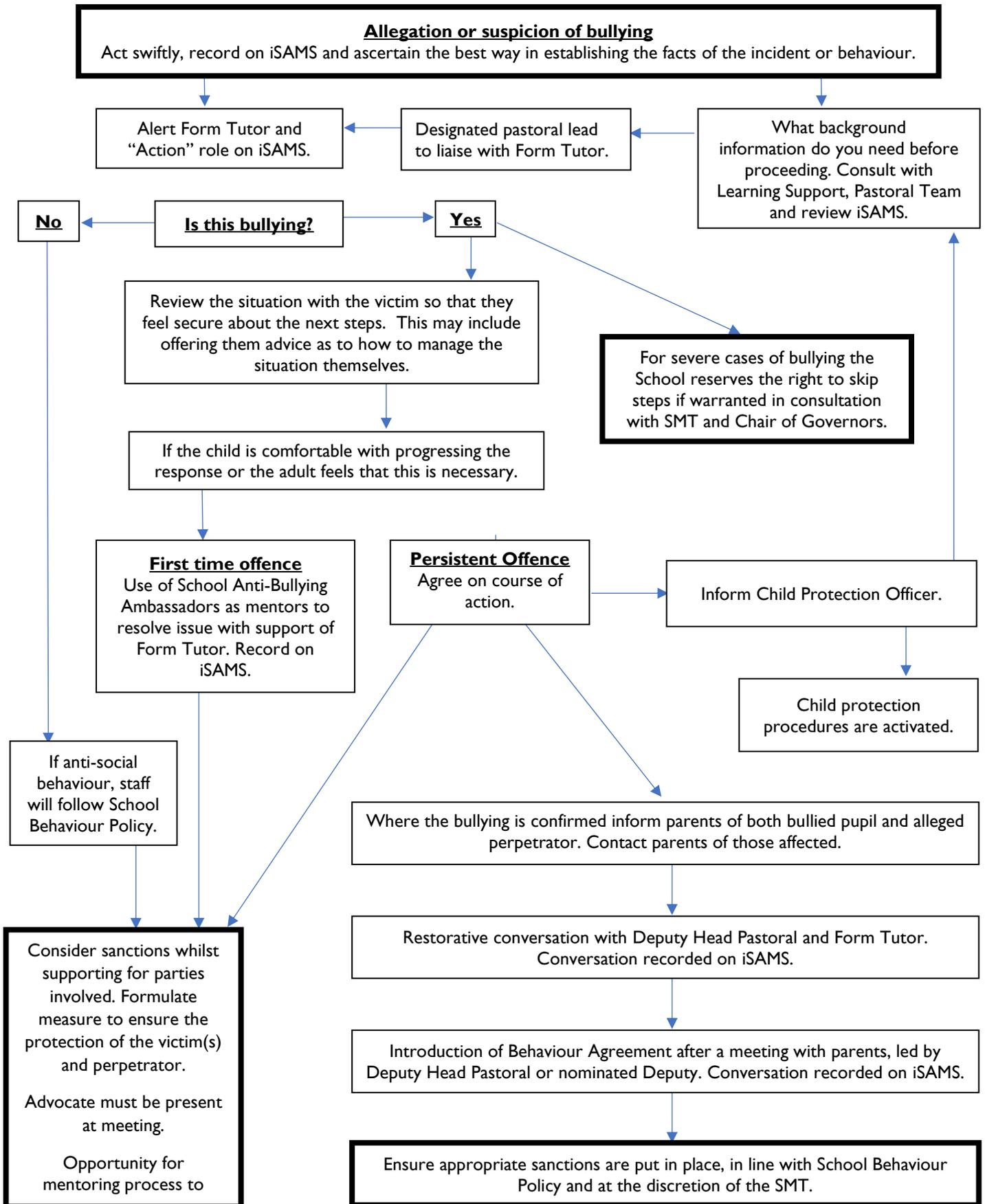
The School encourages involvement from parents, carers, community members and external organisations to foster a collaborative approach to tackle bullying.

The School commits to providing an annual report on bullying incidents and actions taken which will be shared with the Education and Welfare Committee of the governors to address the issue.

The School may use reported incidents during internal training and workshops to enhance prevention strategies and raise awareness of bullying.

4. Appendix I - Bullying Response Flow Chart

Managing the response to bullying incidents.



5. Appendix II - Anti-bullying Ambassador Role Description

Anti-bullying Ambassadors

Who are they?

Respected and thoughtful young people who will stand up to bullying behaviour and believe they can change things for the better.

What do they do?

Anti-bullying Ambassadors believe that bullying behaviour is not acceptable and should not be a part of everyday school life.

They support others and are “upstanders” against bullying behaviour.

They stand to shape attitudes and change behaviours.

They are a pillar of support, look out for others and are a strong voice for the school community.

Why do we need Anti-bullying Ambassadors?

Bullying behaviour is a serious issue amongst young people, with nearly half of young people expressing they have been bullied in the last 12 months (Dept. for Education 2017). If not dealt with effectively, it can have long-term, negative consequences on health and wellbeing.

How will it impact on us?

It can create a happy, safe environment for all, which can boost performance and wellbeing.

It can develop resilience, confidence and positive healthy relationships amongst young people.

It can make a positive difference to young people’s lives.

Anti-bullying Ambassadors will feel more knowledgeable about bullying behaviour, more confident in supporting their peers and they will ensure that the school deals with bullying behaviour more effectively.

What would it involve?

Learn how to look out for the main types of bullying – physical, emotional, social and cyber bullying.

The power of the group - Train on how to be an “upstander” not a “bystander”.

Speak with children who want to talk about a bullying behaviour or an incident.

Be involved in finding solutions to a situation.

Meet with staff to shape school decisions and policies about anti-bullying.

Help arrange events (e.g. “Anti-bullying week”).