



**Wester Hailes  
High School**

*Enabling all pupils to achieve successful outcomes  
regardless of ability or background*

# **ANTI BULLYING AND EQUALITIES POLICY 2022/23**

# *Anti-bullying and Equalities Policy 2022/2023*

## **Give Respect, Get Respect!**

### **Our School Values**

Our school values, which demonstrate what is important to us as a school, are:

- **Learning**
- **Respect**
- **Community**
- **Aspiration**

Our restorative approach and positive ethos between, staff, pupils, parents and partner agencies is embedding the spirit of Wester Hailes Education Centre and high expectations of success within a caring and supportive environment are paramount. We strive for an environment in which mutual respect and individual rights are valued and believe this is conducive to effective learning and teaching.

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 within the school 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 socioeconomic status or any combination of these.

It's every child's right not to be bullied. Children's rights are unique in that many of them, although designed for the safety and protection of children, have to be provided for by adults and the government. Although children and young people are covered under the Human Rights Act 1998, their rights are more clearly specified under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Although neither specifically mentions bullying, bullying behaviour does breach a number of the articles in both. Alongside this, both outline the responsibilities of adults to protect and safeguard children and young people from bullying behaviour.

We understand that bullying is never acceptable and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment

### **Definitions**

#### **Bullying**

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. Bullying behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour might not be repeated, the threat that it might can be sustained over time, typically by actions: looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

## **Bullying Behaviour**

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face and/or online
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked
- Having belongings taken or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face to face and/or online)
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online)

## **Cyber-bullying**

Online bullying shouldn't be treated differently from face-to-face bullying. Online bullying, or 'cyberbullying' as it is often referred to on social networking sites and online gaming platforms. A person can be called names, threatened or have rumours spread about them and this can (like other behaviours) happen in person and online. We address online bullying effectively when we address it as part of our whole antibullying approach, not as a separate area of work or policy.

## **Prejudice-based Bullying**

Prejudice-based bullying includes the protected characteristics, but prejudice can and does extend beyond these and can lead to bullying for a variety of reasons.

**Additional Support Needs:** An additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially being bullied can also lead to an additional support need.

**Age:** Although prejudice and discrimination based on age is not applicable in school settings, it can affect children and young people in a variety of other settings. For example, in workplaces, further and higher education and in wider society.

**Asylum Seekers and Refugees:** Children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying directly and indirectly. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers and refugees, and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

**Body Image and Physical appearance:** This can be hugely important to children and young people, with bullying because of body image having the potential to negatively impact upon their wellbeing.

**Disablist Bullying:** People who bully others may see children and young people with disabilities as being less able to defend themselves and less able to tell an adult about the bullying. The bullying behaviour is likely to be focused upon their specific disability or disabilities, whether they are in mainstream schooling or in specialist provision.

**Gypsy/Travellers:** This group of children and young people are a particularly discriminated against and marginalised group and concerns about bullying are especially acute for secondary schools. Perceived risks about bullying and parents' own experiences of discriminatory behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people, as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller families, such as Roma, may have similar concerns.

**Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying:** Bullying based on sexual orientation is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is also commonly referred to as 'homophobic bullying' but can also be expanded to recognise the specific experiences of bisexual young people using the term 'biphobic bullying'.

## **Equalities**

This is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is about understanding that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality recognises that historically, certain groups of people with particular characteristics e.g. race, disability, sex and sexuality, have experienced discrimination.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions, as well as providing protection for people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. This also includes looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from poor backgrounds.

## **Racism**

“A racist incident is an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”. While this is not absolutely definitive, it requires all allegations to be treated seriously from the outset, investigated and if substantial dealt with and then recorded. This approach is in line with our anti-bullying procedures and all forms of identity based bullying.

## **Homophobia**

Homophobic bullying is when people behave or speak in a way which makes someone feel bullied because of their actual or perceived sexuality. People may be a target of this type of bullying because of their appearance, behaviour, physical traits or because they have friends or family who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning or possibly just because they are seen as being different.

## **Responsibility**

The Head Teacher (David Young) is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy and he is also responsible for nominating an Equalities coordinator (Ellie Meikle) who is familiar with Council equalities guidance. However we are committed to the view that ALL members of the school community, students, staff and parents have a shared responsibility to ensure that a climate exists where bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Pupils are responsible for -

- Promoting positive attitudes and good relations and challenging all forms of prejudice.
- Telling someone if they have any worries about bullying.
- Keeping themselves safe, with support from adults.
- Supporting others to tell a responsible adult or speaking on their behalf.
- Challenging bullying and prejudicial behaviour in others, if safe to do so.
- Questioning and learning the differences between bullying and other challenging behaviours.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Dealing appropriately and effectively with all allegations and in a timely manner.
- Being aware of this policy, following the accompanying procedures and taking all reports of bullying seriously.
- Seeking learning and development opportunities that complement our antibullying policy.
- Supporting students to understand the differences between bullying and other challenging behaviours.
- Building the capacity of children and young people to challenge prejudice and bullying behaviour.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Safeguarding and promoting their child (ren)’s health, development and welfare by supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures.

- Engaging in the support offered by the school if their child is involved in bullying behaviour or has been impacted by bullying.
- The safety of their child/children on the way to and from school.
- Maintaining communication with their child's Pupil Support Leader.
- Working in partnership with staff to maintain the rules, regulations or disciplinary requirements of the establishment.
- Avoiding taking direct action against those known to be involved in bullying in behaviour and/or their parents/carers.

The schools senior management team are responsible for:

- Supporting staff, pupils and families in dealing with cases quickly, firmly and sensitively
- Monitor and track incidents that occur and ensure these are recorded appropriately, following CEC reporting procedures.
- Review the Anti-bullying and Equalities policy every 3 years.
- Provide training opportunities for staff to develop a consistent approach.

All staff can access free training programmes provided by *respectme* and can be found using the following link – <http://respectme.org.uk/training/programmesand-calendar>. Specific training dates can be organised through the local authority.

### **What do we do when bullying occurs?**

A child may not be engaging consciously in bullying behaviour, but its impact is still felt and this is taken seriously. The level of awareness of a child who is bullying is a significant factor in how it is dealt with.

\*Pupils who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported.

\*Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures

### **Strategies include:**

- De-escalation from situations
- Restorative practice/ mediation
- Contact home
- Counselling
- Support from outside agencies
- Time out in Guidance and/or with Senior Team
- Appropriate sanctions
- Referral to other supports such as Educational Psychologist. EWO, Family Household Support, SW or CAMHS
- Extreme cases CP procedures

### **Prevention:**

- Reminding children and young people at least twice a year about how the establishment deals with bullying, including cyberbullying
- Consistent handling of challenging behaviour through restorative practices
- Providing frequent reminders to staff, children, young people and parents/carers of the establishment's anti-bullying and equal-opportunities policy which has been developed with children, young people and parents/carers
- Public, accessible welcoming messages throughout the establishment in a range of languages
- Staff development opportunities on policy development, empathy and resilience
- Frequent opportunities for children and young people to discuss issues
- Use of evaluation tools which measure ethos, relationships and confidence in schools and residential units, such as pupil well-being questionnaires and surveys
- Raising awareness of developing issues, e.g. hate crime, cyber-bullying
- Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and the voluntary sector
- Diversity and anti-bullying days, weeks, assemblies and publications
- Positive audits of race equality, inclusion and achievement of bilingual and minority ethnic pupils (supported by English as an Additional Language Service)
- Promotion of training opportunities to parents that explore the development of attachment, empathy and resilience and developing problem solving skills
- Working towards award programmes, e.g. UN Rights Respecting Schools Award, Diana Award

### **Our support to pupils who are bullied or discriminated against:**

Students will be consulted at all stages of how this is being dealt with

- They are reassured that they do not deserve this and it is not their fault.
- We assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We encourage them to talk about how they feel and try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- We ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us
- We affirm that it can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does

### **Our work with pupils who bully others:**

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying separately.
- We listen to their version of events and talk to anyone who may have witnessed the bullying.

- We seek to understand and address the causes of their behaviour
- Where there is mutual will, we undertake restorative meetings
- We reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop
- When bullying occurs, we contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage
- We work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they need.

### **Cyberbullying and bullying outside the school premises**

Bullying also occurs outside school premises and via mobile phone and social networking sites. Where a pupil or parent reports bullying off school premises, schools will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school
- Talk to the Head Teacher if another school's pupils are allegedly bullying
- Consider additional support, police involvement and Child Protection procedures.
- Talk to the transport company about bullying on buses

### **Parental concerns and Feedback**

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we ask that this be brought to the Pupil Support Leaders notice. This will then be fed back to the appropriate year head and/or Head Teacher. If the school and Head Teacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents 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 CEC Advice and Conciliation Service. We are also pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents when things have gone well.

### **Evaluating and Reviewing our Policy Procedures**

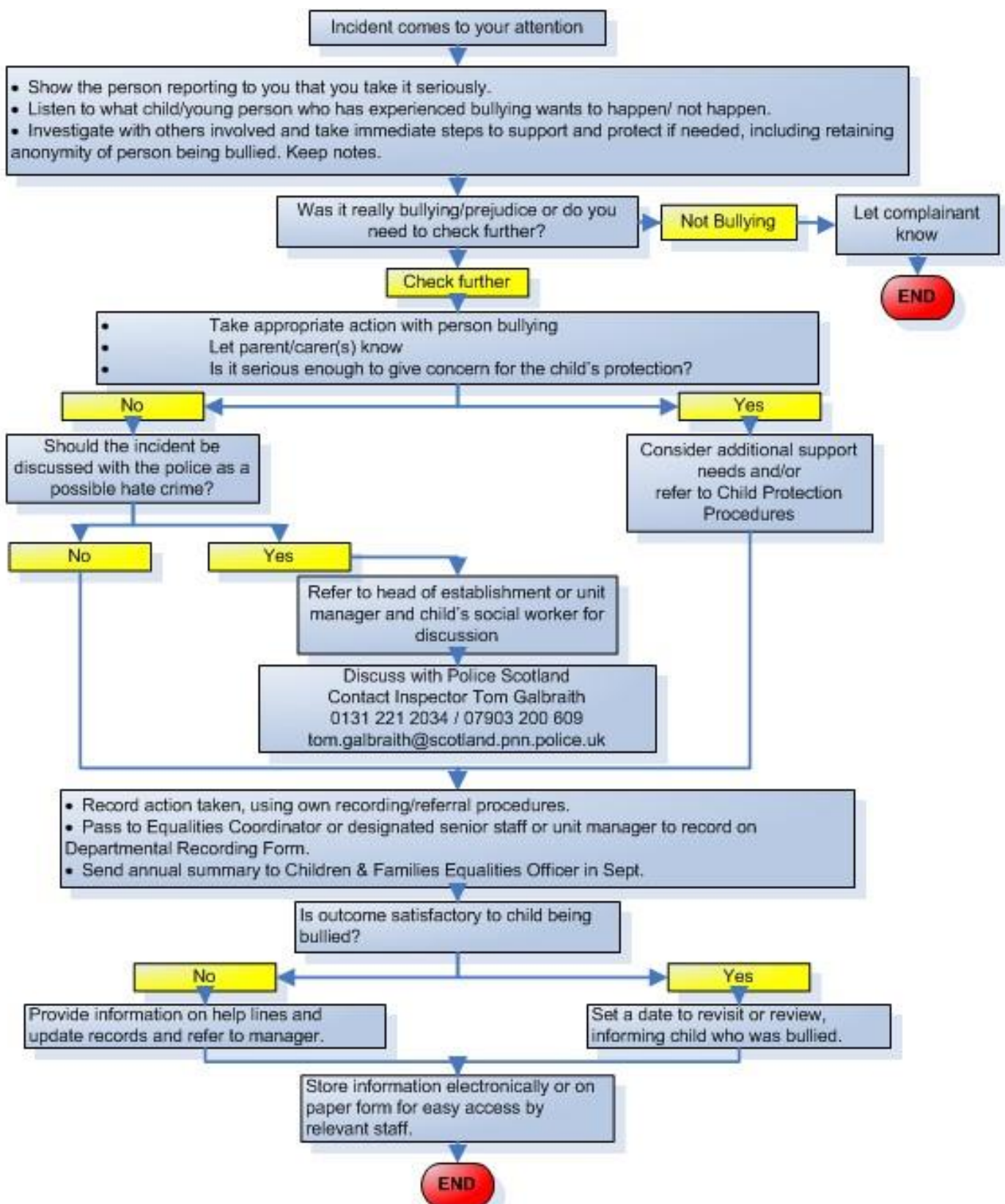
- Pupil focus group and parent questionnaires
- Consultation with Pupil "Equalities Group"
- S1-3 Bullying Survey annually
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed every 3 years
- The following will be closely monitored
  - Number of incidents reported over a given period
  - The number of complaints and compliments we receive from parents
  - Rates of attendance, exclusion, attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups.



## **Reporting and Recording Incidents**

- Students who are bullied or see others being should report this to their Pupil Support Leader in the first instance. Staff should pass on any bullying incidents to Pupil Support Leader/ Year Head or complete a Welfare concern form.
- If the bullying takes place within the classroom, a SEEMIS referral should also be completed and staff should highlight the type of bullying where possible I.E - Homophobic bullying etc.
- Reports of bullying are recorded centrally in the guidance Shared Drive using the CEC Form
- All incidents are recorded and acts of bullying or discrimination on ground of race, disability, gender, faith and sexual orientation are of equal concern and are all clearly distinguishable
- We send annual summaries of incidents to Council headquarters on request

## **Reporting and Recording Incidents (CEC Guidance)**



## Gathering and Monitoring Information

Examples:

- Our school routinely monitors attainment of pupils by ethnicity and gender. We are also committed to developing measures for monitoring the achievements of our looked-after and disabled pupils.
- We also monitor attendance and exclusion of pupils by ethnicity, disability and gender.
- We examine our annual records of incidents and survey information
- We are aware of our local demography, through pupil census data

- We take active steps to ensure that all data held on pupils' disabilities, ethnicity, caring and looked-after status is accurate and regularly reviewed.

### **Communicating this policy**

- School website
- Shared drive for staff
- PSE lessons (S1-S6)
- Whole school assemblies

### **Related Policies**

This policy links with a number of other policies:

- The School Code of Conduct
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy