School Charter

'Always show consideration and mutual respect.'

Douglas Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

The policy is for the whole school community and is based around Douglas Academy's Core Values:

Compassion

Ambition

Resilience

Effort

Don't ignore bullying; by reporting it you help to prevent it.

WORK TOGETHER to PREVENT bullying.

Policy Last Updated: November 2022

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Rationale

This policy has been written in consultation with staff, students, and parents and carers and in line with EDC's anti-bullying guidance. As with all Douglas Academy policies and practices, the 'Four General Principles' of the UNCRC (non-discrimination, best interests of the child, right to survival and development and right to be heard) underpin our approach to dealing with bullying

'Respect for All has a fundamental role to play in helping us realise our vision for all children and young people. It provides a holistic framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all aspects of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. Respect for All reflects Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and recognises that bullying impacts on wellbeing. 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 (2017) – Respect for All: A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People.

Vision and Values

Here at Douglas Academy, our vision is *Working Together: Respecting Others: Pursuing Excellence. W*e understand that bullying behaviour is never acceptable, and if we follow our core values **C**ompassion**, A**mbition**, R**esilience**, E**ffort **(CARE)**, we can *work together* to prevent bullying*.* This will ensure the young people at Douglas Academy have their right to learn and strive in a safe, secure environment.

Overview of Policy

- Aims of policy
- Defining bullying
- Prevention
- Response to bullying:
    - Students' role and responsibilities
    - Staff's role and responsibilities
    - Parents' role and responsibilities

Aims of Policy

Bullying behaviour is not, and should never be, an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up. Bullying is a breach of Children's Rights and should not be tolerated.

This policy aims to:
- Define bullying, so as to make it more easily identifiable;
- Recognise that creating a positive school ethos and environment by promoting compassion and building resilience is an important aspect of bullying prevention;
- Establish effective policies and practices which prevent all types of bullying behaviour;
- Outline effective policies and practices that proactively deal with all types of bullying behaviour;

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- Support the accurate recording of incidents of bullying in order to facilitate an appropriate response and follow up.

Defining Bullying

The following definition is in line with EDC and the Scottish Government's understanding of what constitutes 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 (*Respect Me*, 2015).

Bullying does not need to involve behaviour that is persistent or repeated. The impact an incident has on a student is most important. The impact a single incident has will often persist for a considerable period of time and this is enough to constitute bullying. One incident is sufficient to alert staff to take supportive action.

Over time, research and the experience of schools have led to an emerging understanding of bullying as a behaviour which emerges from complex social dynamics rather than solely as a characteristic of the individual. It is therefore not helpful to label students as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Such labels can isolate students and prevent a change in behaviour.

Bullying behaviours can include:

- name calling, teasing, putting down or threatening and intimidating by making prejudiced-based remarks;
- hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking;
- taking and damaging belongings;
- ignoring, excluding, spreading rumours;
- sending abusive messages electronically, eg via text emails or social networking sites;
- making people feel like they are being bullied or fearful of being bullied;
- targeting someone because of who they are or who they are perceived to be.

This list is not an exhaustive list; there may be other behaviours that could impact negatively on a child's wellbeing.

Not every unkind behaviour constitutes bullying. Children and young people are still learning how to get along with others. They will tease each other, fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and disagree about what they like and don't like. These are examples of ordinary conflict, perhaps thoughtlessness and possibly insensitive behaviour and should be viewed as a normal part of growing up. However, if left unchecked, these behaviours can lead to bullying, making those being bullied feeling afraid, uncomfortable or unsafe in their environment. They should be viewed as an opportunity to help children and young people learn about resolving conflict and getting along with others. Parents, teachers and other adults need to model kindness, conflict

resolution, inclusion and responsibility.

The same social dynamics that result in bullying behaviour can often lead to the targeting of individuals due to particular characteristics. This is considered as prejudicial bullying as per the 'protected characteristics' outlined in the Equality Act (2010) as well as other characteristics that a child or young person may have. *See Appendix 1 – Prejudice Based Bullying*.

The characteristics from *Appendix 1 – Prejudice Based Bullying* should be considered when developing approaches to prevent bullying and when incidents of prejudicial bullying occur additional guidance should be sought from the EDC anti-bullying policy.

Prevention

The efforts of all members of the school community to create a supportive and positive ethos and learning environment must continue and develop further. A culture that encourages **respect**, **compassion**, values opinions, celebrates differences and promotes positive relationships will make it difficult for bullying to occur or be tolerated.

All members of the school community should be mindful of their commitment to the school Charter especially their pledge to "*treat all members of the school community with consideration and mutual respect*".

In addition, upholding the following articles of the UNCRC will help to create the inclusive ethos and environment we strive to achieve and allow members of the school community to recognise bullying as something that is in conflict with the fulfilment of children's rights. *See Appendix 2 – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Douglas Academy promotes an ethos which allows pupils to achieve their potential in a safe and happy environment. We can support pupils using a variety of strategies including;

- Use of PSHE to address and inform pupils of bullying type behaviours, including presentations by Rights Respecting School pupils and specific units on work on anti-bullying.
- Senior and Junior Buddies
- Campus Police Officer to support with anti-bullying
- Individualised support
- Focus at assemblies.
- Senior pupils trained in the delivery of MVP to S2 pupils
- Senior pupils trained in the delivery of Mental Health to S1 pupils
- Time allocated at in-service days for all staff to participate in respectme's Antibullying Learning Academy eLearning modules
- Introduction of termly Wellbeing tracker monitored by PT Guidance allowing pupils to track wellbeing and raise any concerns with their guidance teacher. Electronic

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nature of the form allows pupils to raise concerns or request to speak to their Guidance teacher in a private manner.

Response to Bullying

The issue of bullying is one that concerns all members of the school community. Staff, students and parents and carers should all be familiar with the following expectations and responsibilities regarding responding to bullying and should consider their response within the context of the UNCRC's 'Four General Principles'. They should consider and be mindful of what is in the student's best interest, listening to their views and adopting an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach.

Everyone

- Be a role model by displaying compassion and respect to **all** members of the school community and the surrounding environment.
- Work together to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to prevent bullying behaviour.
- Follow the specific guidance detailed below.

Students

- Do not ignore bullying; make the effort to report bullying behaviour and help to stop it.
- Report incidents to an appropriate adult. This could include: Guidance Teachers, Year Group Heads, Registration Teachers, Class Teachers and/or parents and carers.
- Support and encourage others to act appropriately in response to bullying to further develop resilience.
- Do not judge or isolate any parties involved in bullying. Show understanding and compassion for their situation.
- Remember you have the right to pursue your ambitions in an environment where you feel safe, valued and respected.

Staff

- Be aware of East Dunbartonshire's Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance for Education Establishments (2015, updated 2019).
- Be mindful of your role as duty-bearers, enabling students to access their rights.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in the school environment.
- If a student reports an incident of bullying to a member of staff, or staff member witnesses the incident, they should take the incident seriously. The staff member should listen and take notes of the points made.

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- Refer to relevant Guidance teacher(s) or Year Group Head via SEEMIS or email.
- Guidance teachers will work with students involved and their families to achieve restoration and prevent further related incidents. See *Appendix 3 - Examples of Good Practice*
- All incidents of bullying, and the subsequent actions taken, will be logged by Guidance teachers and/or Year Group Heads in Pastoral Notes/SEEMIS Bullying Application. See *Appendix 4 – Detailed Notes for Guidance Team*.

Parents and Carers

- Listen to your child's concerns. Keep an open mind and try to establish the facts of the situation as far as possible.
- Contact your child's Guidance teacher or Year Group Head.
- Work with staff to support your child. This may include reinforcing relevant messages e.g. importance of respect within school community or opportunities to increase resilience.
- Also, be vigilant regarding your child's use of social media. If you have concerns that your child may be experiencing cyber-bullying speak to them about it and contact your child's Guidance teacher if you feel that support from school would help address your concerns.

Additional Information

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with other school policies which promote positive behaviour and relationships.

The EDC anti-bullying policy can be found on our school website and includes additional guidance and references to important legislation.

This policy will be reviewed and communicated annually to staff, students and parents and carers.

Appendix 1 – Prejudice Based Bullying

Prejudice-based bullying is bullying behaviour motivated by prejudice, or 'perceived' to be motivated by prejudice, and can be based on any characteristic unique to a child or young person's identity or circumstance.

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010) include:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Bullying behaviour can also target other children and young people who have the following characteristics or difficulties:

- Care experienced young people
- Young carers
- Socio-economic group
- Faith groups
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying

Specific Guidance for Dealing with Homophobic, Biphobic or Transphobic Bullying

Staff will talk to pupils who have experienced homophobia, biphobic and transphobic bullying, and ensure that any steps to resolve bullying includes them. There will be a sensitive approach to ensure that any disclosure does not 'out' the pupil to others.

The following pointers may help members of the school community recognise this type of bullying and have increased confidence in dealing with it effectively:

- Sexual Orientation & Homophobic Bullying is bullying which is based on sexual orientation and is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. It is 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'.

- Children and young people do not necessarily have to be gay, lesbian or bisexual themselves to experience 'homophobic bullying'. This type of bullying may be directed towards young people perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual young people; those that do not conform to gender norms and/or expectations; and those who have gay friends or family. Children with LGBT parents may also experience homophobic bullying. Although homophobic bullying is distinct from sexist and transphobic bullying, it is related to these forms of bullying through underlying sexist attitudes.

- The term 'transgender' is an 'umbrella term' for those whose 'gender identity' or expression differs in some way from the gender that was assigned to them at birth. Gender identity reflects an individual's internal sense of self as being male, female, or an identity between or outside the two.

- Transgender people face significant societal prejudice, largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender or gender 'variant' children and young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. This can manifest in many ways, including transphobic and homophobic name calling or deliberately mis-gendering them. An individual may also experience transphobic bullying as a result of a perception that a parent, relative or other significant figure is transgender.

Appendix 2 – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Article 2 Without Discrimination
- Article 3 Best Interest of the Child
- Article 5 Parental Guidance
- Article 8 Preservation of Identity
- Article 12 Respect for the Views of the Child
- Article 13 Freedom of Expression
- Article 14 Freedom of Thought, Belief and Religion
- Article 15 Freedom of Association
- Article 19 Protection from Violence
- Article 23 Children with Disability
- Article 28 Right to Education
- Article 29 Goals of Education
- Article 30 Children of Minorities

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Appendix 3 - Examples of Good Practice

The child or young person who has **experienced bullying behaviour** will receive appropriate support and protection.

Examples of good practice include:

- the pupil is taken to a comfortable place with no distractions;
- the pupil is listened to;
- the pupil is gently encouraged to talk, to find out what happened, who was involved, where and when – and notes taken;
- the pupil's views are sought
- incident recorded on the school system;
- situation monitored and reviewed if required.

When a child or young person has **displayed bullying behaviour**, a member of the establishment's management team should, based on their professional judgement, endeavour to manage the resolution of the bullying incident within the school. Parents should be involved when their active support is needed to implement a resolution of the bullying incident.

Examples of good practice include:

- the pupil is listened to
- the pupil views are sought
- avoid labelling, instead address the behaviour
- provide appropriate interventions to prevent further incidences of bullying behaviour

Such approaches might include:

- small group support or individual support for promoting positive behaviour
- restorative approaches;
- solution orientated approaches;
- involvement of educational psychologists and campus police.

However, 'where it is considered that in all circumstances to allow the child or young person to continue attendance at school would be seriously detrimental to order and discipline or the educational wellbeing of the pupils there' (*national guidance on the prevention and management of exclusions, Included, Engaged and Involved-Part 2* (June 2017)), senior managers have the power to exclude as a last resort.

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Appendix 4 – Detailed Notes for Guidance Team

Procedures to be followed for a bullying incident:

1. When an incident is reported ensure both Guidance Teacher and YGH are informed.
2. GT and YGH meet to decide an appropriate course of action, avoiding making an early judgement and the incident should be logged on SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module.
   SEEMIS – Click & Go
   Application > Management > Bullying and Equalities > Maintain Incident
3. An investigation should follow and SEEMIS updated throughout this process.
4. During investigation ensure all parties are safe from continued bullying.
5. Inform parents/carers of ongoing investigation and the likely duration of the investigation.

In relation to the above bullet point, an example where it may not be appropriate to inform parents could include a transgender young person. The young person may not have told their family about their gender identity and inadvertent disclosure could cause needless stress for them or put them at risk. Confidentiality and privacy should be respected and disclosing information to parents or carers should only be done with consent of the young person. Further guidance can be accessed in the following link:
https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/media/1344/supporting-transgender-young-people.pdf

6. Once the investigation is complete inform all parties of outcome of investigation.
7. Follow-up outcome of investigation with appropriate sanctions, restorative practices etc.
8. Monitor any future interactions to ensure there is no repeat of the behaviours.
9. Record a summary of incident on Latest Pastoral Notes for all pupils involved.
10. Once the incident is concluded, the incident should be signed off.

Where the allegation is unfounded, recording of the pupil's name alleged to have been displaying bullying behaviour should be entered in the bottom box headed '*other person*' within the '*person displaying*' section on SEEMIS. This will ensure that the allegation will not show on the pupil's SEEMIS record.

Where an incident is found to be bullying, the designated member of staff should ensure that appropriate supports/interventions are in place to address any underlying prejudice. It is important to ensure that notes taken during the investigation or discussions with children and young people, parents and carers are recorded on SEEMIS pastoral notes to provide a chronology of events and actions taken, as soon after the event as possible.

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