

## **1. RATIONALE**

"Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards." – 'A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People' Scottish Government, November 2010

Throughout this policy, the terms 'bully' and 'victim' will not be used. Instead, respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service, advise that the terms 'person displaying bullying behaviour' and 'person experiencing bullying behaviour' or simply 'people involved in bullying behaviour' could be used as alternatives. respectme does not label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims' as labelling a child or young person on the basis of bullying behaviour can result in a confirmed identity as a 'bully' or 'victim' resulting in on-going behaviour patterns based on this identity. Labelling is unhelpful and ineffective when the ultimate aim is behavioural change. The scope of the policy will cover all 3-18 year old children and young people within Sgoil an Rubha and the Authority.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

### **2.1 Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance for everybody within Sgoil an Rubha on the approach, processes and procedures that should be followed to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying behaviour.

We will regularly review our policy based on the guidance with Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar's Anti- Bullying policy.

## 2.2 Principles which Underpin the Policy

In Sgoil an Rubha, we expect that everybody will 'abide to the spirit' of the policy by following the principles which underpin this policy; notably:

- Every pupil (child) has a right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from victimisation and fear'.
- Children have the right to protection from all forms of physical and emotional fear/violence.
- U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19
- All forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable.
- All relationships within Sgoil an Rubha should be based on mutual respect and everybody must strive to abide by the school values – kindness, honesty, respect, fairness and excellence.
- A positive ethos is essential to the creation of an anti-bullying culture

In Sgoil an Rubha, we are committed to realising the potential of all children, young people, communities and staff by:

- Putting people at the heart of all we do
- Nurturing an ethos of achievement
- Striving for sustainable achievement
- Working co-operatively

If children and young people are experiencing bullying behaviour the likelihood of children achieving their educational outcomes are compromised. The policy should contribute to the development of children and young people through:

- Getting it Right for Every Child: the agenda which sets out how agencies and professionals should work together to promote the welfare and rights of children and young people, and ensure that they are: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included
- The four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence: whereby children and young people are enabled through the national curriculum to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.

### **2.3 Who Should Implement the Policy**

All staff within Sgoil an Rubha and visiting partner agencies should comply with the terms of the policy.

It is the direct responsibility of all connected with Sgoil an Rubha to work within this policy. Parents/carers and pupils themselves also have a responsibility to implement and support this policy aims.

### **2.4 Roles and Responsibilities**

Sgoil an Rubha will:

- promote the importance of all members of Sgoil an Rubha contributing to a positive ethos in which all individuals are respected regardless of difference or status. Opportunities should be sought to promote and celebrate diversity
- ensure the anti-bullying policy is regularly reviewed
- take seriously all complaints or allegations made by young people about bullying behaviour
- be highly aware of the types of bullying behaviour presented by advances in technology
- ensure all members of the learning setting are aware of the anti-bullying policy and procedures
- identify a senior member of staff who has responsibility for coordinating anti-bullying practice and procedures
- record and report bullying behaviour allegations and incidents on a monthly basis through SEEMiS
- monitor the implementation of the policy to ensure its effectiveness
- promote appropriate and relevant Continuous Professional Learning
- Promote positive behaviour and raise awareness of bullying behaviour with pupils, by creating Anti-Bullying Working Groups and Anti-bullying assemblies.

## **2.5 References to Council and National Policies and Guidelines**

### **Council:**

- Support for Learning Policies
- Equal Opportunities Policies
- Child Protection Policies and Guidelines
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policies
- Data Protection Policies
- Guidance and Pupil Support Policies
- Policy on E-Safety and acceptable use of communication, Technology in schools

### **National:**

- Building the Ambition, National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare, Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- ‘Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour’ - (Scottish Government 2013)
- ‘A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century’
- Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment
- Curriculum for Excellence
- How Good Is Our School? (4th Edition) 2015
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Getting it Right for Every Child – Scottish Government
- Early Years Framework – Scottish Government – January 2009

- National Care Standards – Early Education & Childcare up to the age of 16 – March 2005
- Happy, Safe and Achieving their Potential 2005 Standard 2, 9 and 10 Standards (2012) GTCS
- GTCS Code of Professionalism and Conduct 2.1 and 2.2
- “A National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People” (Scottish Government, 2010)
- Guidance on Developing Policies to Promote the Safe and Responsible Use of Mobile Technology in Schools – Scottish Government

### **Legislation:**

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004) and associated Code of Practice
- Human Rights Act 1998
- European Convention on Human Rights (1950)
- Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 • The Equality Act 2010 • The Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Act 2009

## **3. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

### **3.1 What is Bullying Behaviour**

“Bullying is a mixture of behaviours and impacts which can impact on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out”. (respectme, Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service)

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, and is unacceptable in Sgoil an Rubha. Bullying behaviour can be defined by its impact on the person/people affected as a result of the behaviour and actions of others, whether intended or unintended. Bullying behaviour can be described as verbal, physical or emotional/psychological.

Bullying behaviours can include, but are not limited to:

- Name calling, teasing, verbal threats
- Physical abuse
- Theft/vandalism of property
- Isolating/excluding others
- Psychological abuse
- Manipulative behaviour
- Online bullying
- Targeting others because of real or perceived differences

Staff within Sgoil an Rubha will actively promote respectful relationships. Children and young people may disagree with one another, fall out, have arguments, or stop talking to each other. Staff will ensure that this is distinguished from bullying behaviour, which will be addressed and managed effectively within the school. Interventions will focus on both the behaviours and their impacts.

### **3.2 Prejudice Based Bullying**

Prejudice based bullying is when bullying behaviours are directed towards an individual or group due to actual or perceived differences. The Equality Act 2010 identifies protected characteristics in schools: The Act extends protection against discrimination related to gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity to pupils in school.

However, the Act makes an exception that discrimination on the grounds of age and marriage and civil partnership are not protected in schools. It is unlawful to discriminate against people with, or people who are associated with those who have protected characteristics.

The Act generally covers anyone who has one or more of the following 'protected characteristics':

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – including lack of belief
- sex, and sexual orientation.

For further information regarding Prejudice Based Bullying, see Appendix 5.

#### **4. IMPACT OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

Bullying behaviour impacts on the wellbeing of those affected and can be a major barrier to learning and their social and emotional development. It is the responsibility of **all** adults in Sgoil an Rubha to listen to, respect and provide support to any child or young person who may be experiencing bullying behaviours.

Being on the receiving end of bullying behaviour may manifest itself in a number of ways, such as:

- Non-attendance/reluctance to attend school
- Withdrawal from usual activities

- Anxiety
- Tearfulness
- Depression
- Changes to behaviour
- Aggression
- Demonstrating bullying behaviour towards others
- Eating disorders
- Self-harm and suicidal thoughts
- Physical changes to appearance

## **5. PREVENTION**

Staff within Sgoil an Rubha will actively help to prevent bullying behaviour and restore positive relationships. Bullying behaviour is never acceptable.

The following approaches are a range of suggestions to promote and foster respectful relationships:

- Planned learning opportunities across the 3-18 curriculum
- The Anti-Bullying policy will be made accessible for parents, staff and pupils on the Sgoil an Rubha website and through information leaflets which may be distributed from the school office from time to time.
- Promote a culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and children, young people and staff model positive, respectful behaviour (Appendix 6)
- Raise awareness through pro-active strategies (anti-bullying working group, anti-bullying week, assemblies, posters to be displayed, information events, staff training etc.)
  - Educate pupils, parents and staff on how to recognise and deal with bullying behaviour through Health and Wellbeing Education, Social Stories, Circle Time, Parents' Evenings. etc



- Staff within Sgoil an Rubha will work in partnership with agencies or organisations such as, but not limited to: NHS Western Isles, Children Services, Equalities Officer, Police Scotland, Churches and Faith Groups, Third Sector Organisations such as Action for Children etc. and respectme, Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service and Childline
- Ensure safety and appropriate supervision of areas identified as high risk, e.g. changing rooms, social areas, corridors etc

When bullying does take place it is important that **all** staff, children and young people, parents have the knowledge, skills and confidence to resolve different situations. When dealing with bullying situations, the person who is on the receiving end of the bullying behaviour, the person displaying bullying behaviour and the others involved, will be included in the process.

## **6. ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

### **6.1 Reporting Incidents**

Bullying behaviour can be a one-off incident or a repeating pattern and either can have a serious impact. All bullying behaviour will be addressed.

Staff within Sgoil an Rubha will provide safe and confidential means in which to report any alleged incidents of bullying behaviour. All staff within Sgoil an Rubha will be equipped to respond appropriately to an allegation of bullying behaviour. Pupils should feel that they will be listened to, supported and that reporting an incident of alleged bullying behaviour will be dealt with fairly, sensitively, appropriately and timeously.

Any response to a reported incident of alleged bullying behaviour must be child-centred and based on the values set out in Getting it Right for Every Child.

## **6.2 Recording Incidents**

Sgoil an Rubha has clear procedures in place for the recording of bullying incidents. (Appendix 4)

## **6.3 Dealing Effectively with Bullying Incidents**

Dealing with alleged bullying incidents requires a partnership approach. Co-operation and dialogue between involved parties should always be the starting point for resolution of alleged incidents of bullying behaviour. Responding to an incident will usually involve staff, children and young people, parents/carers and if appropriate, other agency staff.

Parents and carers should be informed and involved when staff within Sgoil an Rubha are dealing with a bullying incident. However, this will be determined by individual circumstances. Staff within the school will seek to effectively resolve the issue and minimise harm and risk to the pupils involved. Pupils on the receiving end of bullying behaviour or those demonstrating bullying behaviour will be respected and dealt with in confidence.

Alleged bullying incidents involving one or more of the protected characteristics, as outlined in Appendix 5, must be recorded immediately by completing the appropriate Pupil Incident Report on SEEMiS and immediately alerting the Head of Education to make him/her aware of the incident and any action taken.

## **6.4 Support Following Reporting a Bullying Incident**

All reported incidents of alleged bullying behaviour will be responded to and the appropriate action taken. The resulting action(s) will depend on the outcome of co-operative dialogue between parties involved. Further procedures may be required to be implemented. All pupils will be involved in the process of restorative practice/resolution with the expectations of providing positive behaviour outcomes and resulting in a reduction in exclusions.

## **7. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

### **7.1 Staff**

- All staff will be provided with clear procedures for addressing and recording suspected and reported incidents of bullying behaviour.
- All Sgoil an Rubha staff will be equipped to receive and respond appropriately to a report of bullying behaviour.
- The Principal Teacher will be working with Anti-Bullying Working groups throughout the school year. This will involve pupils from all stages in the school.
- In addition, the Head Teacher will have a lead responsibility for managing the reports of bullying behaviour. In her absence, the Principal Teacher will take the lead role.
- It is the role of the adult to listen, to explore thoughts, feelings and impact, and to help the child or young person feel safer as a result.

No matter how effective policies are, there are times when incidents will occur. In order to manage incidents effectively, Sgoil an Rubha will refer to the suggestions laid out in Appendix 3.

### **7.2 Further Suggested Methods of Intervention**

- Initial investigation with designated staff member
- Mediation
- Circle Time
- Nurturing group
- Counselling
- External Agency Involvement (Seasons for Growth, Assertiveness training, Police, etc.)
- Restorative and resilience support as part of the recovery process

### **7.3 Recording the Report**

It is the expectation that the number of reported and recorded incidents of bullying behaviour may increase as a result of the effective implementation of this policy. Through listening to pupils reporting bullying behaviour, staff should use their professional judgement in deciding whether to report the incident through the Management Information System (e.g. SEEMiS) or the appropriate format for our school. (Ref Appendix 4 - SEEMiS (Bullying and Equality Menu, Pupil Incident Report Form)

### **7.4 For Children and Young People Being Bullied**

Through the ethos and culture of a positive environment our pupils will be helped to feel confident enough to inform the person that they do not like their bullying behaviour and to ask them to stop. Pupils will also be encouraged and supported to speak out if they witness instances of bullying behaviour. All staff and pupils within our school have responsibility to take all reports of bullying behaviour seriously and to deal with incidents appropriately.

The following guidelines are for children or young people who feel that they are experiencing bullying behaviours:

i) **Who should a child or young person inform?**

- If they feel that they are being bullied, they should inform a trusted individual as soon as possible. They should be advised that it is best to report any incidents of bullying as soon as they are able to (as delaying reporting could lead to an escalation of the situation).
- A trusted individual could, for example, be a buddy, teacher, auxiliary, classroom assistant, playground assistant, nursery key worker or parent/carer.

ii) **What methods can a child or young person use to do this?**

- They can ask someone to accompany them when reporting the bullying incident if this makes them feel more comfortable.
- Pupils may wish to write down what has happened to them and either hand it to a member of staff, ask someone to hand it in for them or use the Worry Box.

iii) **What will happen once an incident has been reported?**

- Children and young people should be aware that all reported incidents will be taken seriously.
- At Sgoil an Rubha, minor incidents would be dealt with by the children's class teacher or another appropriate individual, whereas severe incidents will be passed on to senior management.
- The child or young person will be kept informed of any action taken at important stages of the resolution process by the senior member of staff dealing with the incident.

iv) **Will parents/ carers be informed?**

- Depending on the nature/severity of the incident, class teachers may inform parents/carers of incidents via Home/School diaries or by telephone. If children request that their parents are to be informed this will be done.
- In the case of a bullying incident being referred to the Head Teacher or in her absence the Principal Teacher, they will make a decision as to whether parents/carers will be informed. In all likelihood if an incident is serious enough to be referred to the senior management of the school, it will warrant parents/carers being informed. This may not always be the case however.
- Making decisions about informing parents/carers will be at the discretion of the Senior Management Team who will apply professional judgement and advise staff accordingly.
- Parent/carer involvement may be important for gaining background information regarding the incident, lending support to the child or young person and could help to foster the resolution process.

**v) What should the child or young person do if the bullying behaviour does not stop?**

- If the bullying behaviour does not stop, they should be advised to report further incidents immediately to the same adult who dealt with the original situation, if possible, and/or another trusted individual.

**vi) What if the child requires further support?**

- If the child requires further support, then they must be assured that they can approach adults within Sgoil an Rubha at any time.
- Advice on support from outside agencies can also be provided by teachers within the school.
- National and local agencies, such as Childline and CEOP, can also be contacted for support. (Appendix 1)
- respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service have a booklet 'Bullying...what can I do?' This is available on-line to download or a hard copy may be requested.

## **7.5 For Children and Young People Displaying Bullying Behaviour**

This section describes what should take place if a child or young person is thought to be displaying bullying behaviour or has been identified as being involved in instances of bullying behaviour.

**i) What will happen if a child or young person displays bullying behaviour?**

- They will be informed that their behaviour is inappropriate and be asked to stop
- They must be made aware that any incident will be addressed.
- They will be offered appropriate support/strategies to encourage positive behaviour and restore relationships.
- They will be advised of the potential consequences of their behaviour not changing or stopping.

**ii) Will a child or young person's parents/carers be informed?**

- Informing parents/carers of the bullying behaviour will be at the discretion of the Senior Management Team and dependent on the individual incident based on professional judgement.

- Parents/carers will be informed if:

- the incident is deemed severe

- staff within Sgoil an Rubha are unable to resolve the incident

- background information on the child or young person could be used to identify reasons for the bullying behaviour

- the child or young person requests parent/carer involvement

- Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone, letter, email or invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher and/or any other members of staff, relative to the incident e.g. Class Teacher

**iii) Where will this be recorded?**

All incidents will be recorded on the Pupil Incident Report Form in the Bullying and Equality section of SEEMiS (Appendix 4) - including note on Subject Access Request and FOI)

- The Pupil Incident Report Form will contain details of the incident and action taken

**iv) What if the child or young person requires further support?**

- If they require further support, they should be advised to approach a trusted individual.

- They can seek clarification on the progress of the reported incident.

- They can request support to manage their behaviour.

- Details of outside agencies should be made available to the child (e.g. respectme, ChildLine, etc.)

## **7.6 For parents and carers who have concerns:**

This section is advice for parents/carers who are concerned that a child or young person is being bullied or is displaying bullying behaviours. All concerns will be treated seriously and dealt with appropriately.

### **i) Who should a parent/carer contact if they have concerns?**

- Any parents/carers with concerns about issues surrounding the bullying behaviour should contact the Class Teacher in the first instance or in the event of a serious incident the Head Teacher directly.

### **ii) What will happen?**

- Any parent/carer with concerns will be made aware that all reported incidents will be recorded and dealt with seriously.
- A number of measures can be taken, including speaking with the individuals concerned, employing restorative practices and/or involving outside agencies.

### **iii) How will parents/carers be kept informed of progress?**

- Parents/carers will be kept informed of action taken at important stages of the resolution process through telephone calls, letters, email or meetings with school staff.
- Appointments can be requested with the appropriate member of staff. If the situation is not resolved through this, senior management will be involved.

### **iv) What if a parent/carer is unhappy with how the situation is being handled?**

- Any individual has a right to express their dissatisfaction and complain if they feel that the situation has not been handled appropriately.
- If a parent is unhappy with how the situation has been/is being handled, they should contact the Head Teacher directly. Parents will also be made aware of Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar's Complaint Procedures.

### **v) What if a parent/carer requires further support?**

- If a parent/carer requires further support, they can contact the person dealing with the incident.
- They can request support to manage the child or young person's behaviour.
- Parents/carers can also be provided with details of outside agencies (e.g Respectme, Parentline, etc. Appendix 1)



## **7.7 For Bystanders to Bullying Incidents:**

Bullying behaviour in any form is always unacceptable. Anyone who witnesses an incident and reports it will have their concerns addressed sensitively. This section provides guidance to children and young people who have witnessed instances of bullying behaviour and wish to report it:

### **i) Who should a bystander contact if they have concerns?**

- Any bystander who is worried about someone being affected by bullying behaviour should approach a trusted individual in Sgoil an Rubha.
- Incidents can be reported anonymously.

## **8. MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE POLICY**

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years. However, this may be sooner if there has been any major organisational, cultural, or legislative change.

