

# Policy to Prevent and Respond to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People using Children and Families Services

**Implementation date: 1 November 2013**

## Control schedule

<b>Approved by</b>	Education, Children and Families Committee
<b>Approval date</b>	8 October 2013
<b>Senior Responsible Officer</b>	Diana Dodd
<b>Author</b>	Diana Dodd
<b>Scheduled for review</b>	9 October 2017

## Version control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Comment</b>
0.1	23/4/15	Diana Dodd	

## Committee decisions affecting this policy

<b>Date</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Link to report and minute</b>
8.10.13	Education Children and Families	<a href="http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/3116/education_children_and_families_committee">http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/3116/education_children_and_families_committee</a>

# Policy to Prevent and Respond to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People using Children and Families Department Services

## Policy statement

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- 1.1 The policy exists to protect all children and young people (in services supported by Children and Families) from all forms of bullying by other children and young people. This includes prejudice-based bullying and cyber-bullying and aims to prevent such behaviours and attitudes from developing.

## Scope

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- 2.1 The policy covers children and young people in all City of Edinburgh Council Children and Families services. Additionally, wherever relevant and possible, the policy extends to protection and prevention out with establishments, especially relating to cyber-bullying and early intervention to reduce hate crimes.

## Definitions

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- 3.1 **Bullying** is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects. People who are bullied are seriously upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. The Council has adopted the definition of the national anti-bullying organisation, Respectme which states that bullying might include one-off or unintentional incidents. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 3.2 **Bullying behaviour** is more useful than 'bully' to avoid labelling individuals as this tends to become fixed.
- 3.3 **Person being bullied/picked on/isolated** is used as an alternative to 'victim' for the same reason. Alternatively, "person on the receiving end of bullying behaviour" is also useful.
- 3.4 **Cyberbullying** is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging and social networking websites.

## **Prejudice and discrimination**

3.5 People with particular characteristics are protected from discrimination by the Equalities Act 2010. Seven of these apply to schools and two others to all other public services. They are:

- Age (not schools).
- Disability.
- Gender Reassignment (people at any stage in the process of gender change).
- Marriage or Civil Partnership (not schools).
- Pregnancy and Maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or Belief.
- Sex.
- Sexual Orientation.

3.6 The legislation and this policy requires that allegations be treated seriously from the outset, investigated, recorded and if substantiated, dealt with according to the accompanying Procedures.

3.7 **Parents/Carers** are defined as: A guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities (within the meaning of Sec 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) in relation to, or has care of a child or young person, for example:

- Non-resident parents who are liable to maintain or have parental responsibilities in respect of a child.
- Carers who can be parents.
- Others with parental responsibilities, e.g. foster carers, relatives and friends who are caring for children and young people under supervision arrangements.
- Close relatives, such as siblings or grandparents caring for children who are not looked after or are under home supervision arrangements.
- All councillors have a responsibility for the wellbeing of children in the council's care.

## Policy content

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- 4.1 It is the expectation of Children and Families that all staff, parents and carers will work to prevent and reduce bullying and prejudice among children and young people.
- 4.2 Discrimination on ground of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, are of equal concern and are all clearly distinguishable.
- 4.3 Bullying and discriminatory behaviours are not tolerated in any Children and Families establishment.
- 4.4 Areas of activity in which this policy can be implemented are:
  - Sustaining an ethos of inclusive services.
  - Positive relationship building.
  - Modelling of appropriate behaviour by adults.
  - Supporting and delivering the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.
  - Out of school activities.
  - Events, assemblies, speakers, surveys, drama, newsletters, meetings.
  - Staff training.
  - Partnership working.

## Implementation

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- 5.1 For details of the completed [Implementation and Monitoring form](#), contact the named author of the policy.

## Roles and responsibilities

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- 6.1 Tackling bullying and prejudice is the responsibility of all staff and partners in Children and Families.
- 6.2 Children and Families is responsible for:
  - Developing, maintaining and monitoring this policy and accompanying procedures.
  - Supporting establishments to communicate the policy to staff, children, young people, parents and carers.
  - Consulting with stakeholders on the policy.

- Supporting establishments to examine the overall extent of bullying and prejudice and sharing good practice.
- Reporting to the Executive of the Council as required.
- Providing staff development activities as required.
- Providing advice and conciliation services.
- Working with other Council agencies and partners to prevent and reduce bullying, discrimination and hate crime.

6.3 Heads of Establishments are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of this policy and accompanying procedures.
- Dealing appropriately and effectively with all allegations brought to their attention.
- Following the Department's procedures including recording of incidents.
- Ensuring that their establishment policy corresponds with this policy.
- Ensuring all staff have access to appropriate learning and development including induction training.
- Making efforts to ensure that children and young people feel safe in reporting to named members of staff and are assured that any allegations will be investigated and action taken, where appropriate.
- Encouraging all children, parents, carers and staff to express their concerns and views.
- Referring to the Child Protection Procedures and/or Police where necessary.
- Examining the possible extent of bullying in their school or centre.

6.4 In addition, Head Teachers are responsible for:

- Communicating the policy to staff, children, young people, parents and carers.
- Identifying a dedicated member of senior staff as the Equalities Coordinator.
- Collecting information from children and young people about their experiences and views and showing relevant action as a result.
- Embedding and evidencing regular and frequent proactive work through the improvement plan and/or the curriculum.
- Supporting all staff in following this policy and procedures.
- Liaising with parents and voluntary organisations as appropriate.

6.5 All other Children and Families staff are responsible for:

- Promoting positive attitudes and good relations.

- Dealing appropriately and effectively with all allegations.
- Supporting their head of establishment in undertaking initiatives and gathering information.
- Being aware of this policy and following the accompanying procedures.
- Seeking learning and development opportunities.
- 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.

6.6 Children and Young People 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.
- Encouraging and 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.

6.7 Parents and Carers are responsible for:

- Safeguarding and promoting their child(ren)'s health, development and welfare.
- The safety of their child/children on the way to and from school.
- Maintaining communication with a relevant member of staff.
- Working in partnership with staff to maintain the rules, regulations or disciplinary requirements of the establishment.
- Discussing the issues with their child(ren) according to their age and maturity and taking account of their views.

## **Legislative Context**

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- [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Offences \(Aggravation by Prejudice\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
- [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [In on the Act](#) (Supporting children and young people with additional support needs)

## **Related documents**

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- [City of Edinburgh Council's Framework to Advance Equality and Rights](#)
- [Getting It Right For Every Child](#)
- [Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [CEC Fair Treatment at Work Policy](#)
- [Advice and Complaints Procedure](#)

## **Equalities and impact assessment**

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- 9.1 For a statement concerning the Equality and Rights Impact of this policy, contact the named author of the policy.

## **Strategic environmental assessment**

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- 10.1 There are no environmental impacts resulting from this policy.

## **Risk assessment**

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- 11.1 The Children and Families Risk Register recognises the inherent risk of not fully or properly implementing equalities legislation which leads to poor experience for service users and potential reputational damage. The work to tackle bullying and prejudice is key to meeting one of the public sector duties of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Review**

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- 12.1 A review of the policy will begin during 2016 throughout all relevant Children and Families services.