
RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Report by Director – Education & Lifelong Learning

EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

24 May 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the revised Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy and the accompanying documents to support the Policy.**
- 1.2 The Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy sits within a suite of policies and guidance documents within the Inclusion Policy and framework for Scottish Borders. The Policy supports with work for all learning establishments to have a positive ethos and environment, which is inclusive and reduces the number of incidents of bullying behaviour. However, if bullying behaviour does occur, the Policy aims to address it in a consistent way.
- 1.3 The Policy and supporting documents have been created through a 'community of practice' involving all stakeholders between November 2022 and March 2023.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Sub Education Committee:-**
 - a) Approve the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy (Appendix 1).**
 - b) Support the implementation and communication plan for the Policy and supporting documents.**
 - c) Agrees to the Policy and supporting documents being reviewed and updated in 2026.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The previous Respectful Relationships Policy was created in 2012 and required to be updated.
- 3.2 The Health and Wellbeing Census Reports of 2022 outlined the need for Scottish Borders to look at their definition of bullying and how this was dealt with consistently across all schools and settings.
- 3.3 Respectful Relationships and Bullying do not sit in isolation and are intertwined, therefore the Policy covers both aspects.
- 3.4 The Policy outlines respectful relationships are required in every situation every day, therefore it is important learning establishments all work to ensure this is the case. On the occasions when relationships are not respectful, and bullying behaviour occurs, it is important this is addressed in a consistent way with the necessary recording of the incidents in place. The Policy gives a clear process to follow when bullying behaviour occurs.
- 3.5 An implementation plan outlines how the Policy will be promoted and implemented across learning establishments within the Scottish Borders. Learning establishments, following the Policy's approval, will be expected to create their own statement in partnership with children and young people and parents/carers, with the support of the accompanying documents, to the Policy outlined in the following section of this report.
- 3.6 Within schools and settings, the recording of any bullying behaviour will be within the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module. The tracking and monitoring of this data and any further actions required will be carried out by Senior Management Teams in each school or setting. Any trends which occur over time across the Scottish Borders will be considered and actioned by the Education Senior Leadership Team.
- 3.7 The Policy contributes to the Council Plan, under Fulfilling Our Potential.

4 POLICY AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 4.1 The Respectful Relationships Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy is supported by a number of additional documents:
 1. Policy Summary document – key information from the policy.
 2. Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Establishment Statement – all learning establishments are asked to complete the Statement to show they have agreed and endorse the Policy, as well as ensure children, young people and parents are also involved in the discussions.
 3. Poster – outlining the Policy and the key messages.
 4. Parents Leaflet – summary document with key messages for parents. This was a direct request from a number of the parents who were involved in the development.

5. Power point with key messages – this can be used by all learning establishments with staff, children and young people and parents. Amendments can be made, depending on the audience.
6. Implementation/Communication Plan – this will ensure all stakeholders are informed of the new Policy.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report, apart from time for children and young people, staff and parents/carers to work together to complete the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Statement. Any resources which learning establishments wish to use from 'Respect me' (national anti-bullying organisation) are free and downloadable from their website.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

- a) The existing 2012 Policy is a risk because it is out of date and does not reflect current practice across learning settings. The new Policy will ensure a consistency of approach across Scottish Borders.
- b) The Health and Wellbeing Census Report highlighted bullying happening across Scottish Borders schools. The risk of not having a consistent approach needed to be addressed. The Policy brings a consistency of approach to dealing with and recording bullying.

5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

A full Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for this Policy and is attached.

5.4 Sustainable Development Goals

- a) *Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages:* The Respectful Relationship and Anti-Bullying Policy will provide a consistency of approach across all learning settings, ensuring respectful relationships are embraced at all time and bullying is addressed quickly and effectively if it arises.
- b) *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all potential:* The Respectful Relationship and Anti-Bullying Policy links directly to the Inclusion Policy and Framework. The Policy outlines the necessity of positive relationships, however, when relationships do break down, and if bullying takes place, then a consistency of approach is taken to deal with the situation.
- c) *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:* The Respectful Relationship and Anti-Bullying Policy ensures there is equality of approach across all genders.

5.5 Climate Change

There are no significant effects on rural proofing arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.6 Rural Proofing

There are no significant effects on rural proofing arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received will be reported at the Sub Education Committee Meeting.

Approved by

Lesley Munro

Director – Education & Lifelong Learning

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Background Papers: Not applicable

Previous Minute Reference: Not applicable

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Christine Brown can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA (Tel 01835 824000).